

BIBLE
BIBLE CUSTOMS IN
LANDS

LD

24/9/76

John Stirling



Gate of an Egyptian Governor.

BIBLE LANDS

THEIR

MODERN CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

ILLUSTRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE

By HENRY J. VAN-LENNEP, D.D.

WITH MAPS AND WOODCUTS

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TRAVELS IN ASIA MINOR.

With Observations on the State of Society, and a Description of Antiquarian Researches and Discoveries, together with an Account of Missionary Labours, Illustrations of Biblical Literature and Archæology.

With Map and Illustrations, 2 vols. post 8vo.

‘ Dr. Van-Lennep has written an interesting book respecting regions which in the present day of geographical inquiry, do not receive the attention they deserve at the hands either of travellers or antiquaries. He confines his descriptions of scenery and remarks upon the people entirely to what he himself saw ; and having a great deal of matter to narrate, he has not been under the necessity, like several modern travellers, of eking out the substance of his information by referring to observations of other explorers, or by manufactured digressions of a scientific character,’—RECORD.

INTRODUCTION.

EIGHTEEN hundred years ago the last page of the Holy Scriptures was penned. Since that time the lands of the Bible have passed through various vicissitudes, and been overrun and occupied by many strange nations. Yet it is acknowledged that in no other portion of the globe have traditions, customs, and even modes of thought, been preserved with greater fidelity and tenacity. This is the uniform testimony of all who visit the East. To use the language of one of the most gifted Oriental travelers of modern times: "The unchanged habits of the East render it a kind of living Pompeii. The outward appearances, which, in the case of the Greeks and Romans, we know only through art and writing, the marble, fresco, and parchment, in the case of the Jewish history we know through the forms of actual men, living and moving before us, wearing almost the same garb, speaking in almost the same language, and certainly with the same general turns of speech, and tone, and manners."* How important, then, to the Biblical scholar is the study of the modern East, not only of its antiquities, intensely interesting as they are, but of the manners and customs of its present inhabitants! The remarkable reproduction of Biblical life in the East of our day is an unanswerable argument for the authenticity of the sacred writings; they could not have been written in any other country, nor by any other people than Orientals. As a French writer justly remarks: "These customs, so unchanged; these manners, which have remained the same through the lapse of eighteen centuries, impart strength and vividness to our faith."† The minute and literal correctness of the foregoing testimonies will appear as we proceed in the present work, whose object is to throw such light as can be derived from the manners and customs of the modern inhabitants of Bible lands upon the social, religious, and political life of Bible times. Our subject is

* Stanley, "Jewish Church," i., 12.

† Léon Paul, 110.

not entirely new ; many things have been mentioned by travelers and Orientalists. Some of these, however, were ignorant of the languages of the country they visited, and therefore unable to hold any intercourse with the people. Others only followed the beaten lines of travel, and therefore saw only the worst phases of human nature. Some visited but a small part of the field, though perhaps the most important ; their views and statements are apt to be one-sided, and too sweeping. Others have failed to get at the homes of the people, have learned things only by hearsay, or have viewed every object through the lens of prejudice, sometimes too favorable, but oftener unjust. We make no claim to immunity from fault, but having spent almost a lifetime in the East, and enjoyed unrivaled opportunities of intercourse with all classes of the people, we have no such excuse to plead if we fail to furnish our readers with reliable and comprehensive information upon the topic of our choice.

Let it not be supposed, however, that our object is the mere gratification of a laudable curiosity respecting the interesting countries which have been the scene of Biblical history. We believe the customs of the modern East to be the only key that can unlock the sense of many a valuable text of Scripture and bring it to view. This has repeatedly been proved by experience, and a more thorough acquaintance with the East will doubtless multiply these valuable interpretations. We may, perhaps, not inaptly compare the Scriptures to a manuscript somewhat torn and defaced by the tooth of time ; a well-preserved copy of a portion has come to hand, and may certainly be used in restoring the original. The Biblical style is often rendered obscure to us Occidentals by the omission of details quite needless to the Oriental mind ; and we may surely supply this omission from the living picture of Eastern manners which a kind Providence has placed before us.

While studying the customs of the East, it has often seemed to us that many of them must be the necessary result of the climate and physical resources of the country, and have therefore been adopted by every nation and race that has successively peopled the land. We have, therefore, in the first part of the present work, undertaken to point out whatever characterizes or serves to explain the physical condition and natural productions of Bible lands, and to describe the customs to which they have given birth, never losing sight of the parallel contained in the pages of Holy Writ, and noting any changes that may have oc-

curred since they were penned. But let the reader bear in mind that we are not writing a treatise on the geography, botany, or natural history of the lands of the Bible. Many valuable works have already appeared on these and kindred subjects, and the general reader will find all the information he needs in an encyclopedia or Bible dictionary. We merely propose to throw light upon the Scriptures by tracing such a picture of Bible lands as lies before the mind of an intelligent Oriental; so that we shall omit much interesting matter of a scientific character, because it has no particular bearing upon our subject.

In every nation, however, usages are found which can not be explained or accounted for by a reference to the physical character of the country. These customs have an historical original, lost and forgotten, perhaps, in the lapse of time, but still maintaining its sway over the minds and manners of those who have inherited them. The fact that the customs now prevalent in Bible lands are so different from those of the West, and yet essentially identical with the ancient manners of the East, is of the greatest practical importance to the Biblical student. The Hebrew commonwealth has perished; its people are scattered among all the nations of the earth, whose manners they have adopted. The principal clue, therefore, to what they once were, and our chief means of explaining much that is obscure in Holy Writ, will be found in the customs of the modern East. And we propose, in the second part of the present work, to consider all such details of Oriental life as appear to have, in the main, an historical origin.

A few words of explanation must be added before we proceed to our subject. We have felt considerable hesitation as to the use of some words improperly called Oriental, and of the incorrect spelling of others that are really so, simply lest we should lay ourselves open to the charge of pedantry. It has, however, seemed to us that in such a book as this we could plead neither ignorance nor a bad habit. We have, therefore, written Mohammed, instead of Mahomet; Bedawy (plural, Bedawin), instead of Bedouin; and mosk, instead of mosque. On the other hand, we have not called the religion of Mohammed Mohammedanism, but Islam, its universal name in the East (not *Islamism*, nor the *religion* of Islam); and his followers not Mohammedans, but, as they call themselves, Muslims (not Mussulmans; Muslimin is the plural of Muslim).

We have not interfered, however, with words which have

harmlessly become incorporated in the English language—such as Sultan, Koran, Mecca, etc., which some write Sooltân, Kurân, and Mekkeh.

There are almost as many systems of spelling Oriental words as prominent writers upon the East. Compelled to make a choice, the following method has been adopted as most easy and natural to English-speaking peoples:

Vowels.

- a* always broad, as in *father*.
- e* as in *met, set, fell*.
- i* “ “ *sit, mill*.
- o* “ “ *bone, roll*.
- u* like the French *u* in *ruse*. Hard for English-speaking lips.
- eu* “ “ “ *eu* “ *jeu* “ “ “ “ “ “
- û* “ *u* in *but*.
- oo* as in *room*.

Consonants.

- g* always hard, as in *gap, get, give*.
- gh* like the Greek γ and Parisian *r*.
- j* as the latter part of the English *j*, which is really composed of two sounds, i. e., *d* and *j*. It is like *s* in *measure*.
- h* is a slight aspirate, and *kh* a stronger one.
- ch* as in *cheap*.
- sh* “ “ *sheep*.
- dh* “ hard *th* in *this*.
- th* “ soft *th* in *things*.

In order to prevent misapprehension, we have generally placed an *h* after a final *a* or *e*, where it would be unnecessary were our system always kept in mind.

The chapters on the Physical Geography and Ethnology of Bible lands have been read and approved by my friend, Professor Guyot, of Princeton, to whom I was already indebted for the most valuable suggestions they contain. It is as needless to point out the value thus conferred upon those portions of the work, as it is to inform the public of the immense erudition of the learned professor, which is equaled only by the enthusiasm for the study of nature with which he inoculates all who come in contact with him or his works.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

CUSTOMS WHICH HAVE THEIR ORIGIN IN THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF BIBLE LANDS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	5

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE IN GENERAL, AND OF PALESTINE IN PARTICULAR.....	17
---	----

CHAPTER II.

WATER, AND LIFE UPON THE WATER.....	41
-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL.—CEREALS.....	73
------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

GARDENING AND CULTIVATION BY IRRIGATION.....	92
--	----

CHAPTER V.

VINEYARDS, AND THE USES OF THE GRAPE AND THE OLIVE.....	110
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

FRUIT AND FOREST TREES, WITH THE FLOWERS OF BIBLE LANDS.....	136
--	-----

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS.—CATTLE, SHEEP, AND GOATS.....	169
---	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HORSE, MULE, ASS, AND THE CAMEL.....	208
--	-----

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILD BEASTS OF BIBLE LANDS.....	246
-------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER X.

THE SCAVENGERS.....	265
---------------------	-----

CHAPTER XI.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.....	287
-----------------------	-----

CHAPTER XII.

REPTILES AND INSECTS OF BIBLE LANDS.....	306
--	-----

PART II.

CUSTOMS WHICH HAVE A HISTORICAL ORIGIN.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY TO PART II	329
CHAPTER I.	
ON THE ETHNOLOGY OF THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE.....	337
CHAPTER II.	
ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE.....	375
CHAPTER III.	
THE TENT, AND NOMAD LIFE.....	398
CHAPTER IV.	
PERMANENT HABITATIONS.—THE HOUSE AND THE TOWN.....	416
CHAPTER V.	
THE FURNITURE OF THE HOUSE.....	459
CHAPTER VI.	
THE INMATES OF THE HOUSE.....	497
CHAPTER VII.	
LIFE IN THE FAMILY.....	539
CHAPTER VIII.	
SOCIAL LIFE	589
CHAPTER IX.	
GOVERNMENT.....	695
CHAPTER X.	
RELIGIOUS HOUSES AND MEN.....	737
CHAPTER XI.	
RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.....	737
CHAPTER XII.	
COMMERCE, AND THE MECHANIC ARTS.....	774
APPENDIX I.....	813
APPENDIX II.....	816
INDEX OF SCRIPTURE TEXTS.....	817
INDEX OF SUBJECTS.....	827

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE		PAGE
Gate of an Egyptian Governor <i>Frontispiece.</i>		Modern Shadoof.....	97
An Arab Chief.....	15	Ancient Shadoof.....	98
Vertical Section, north and south, from Mount Ararat to Bagdad (Babylon), and from Damascus to Egypt, with the Course of the Jordan.....	19	Persian River-wheel.....	101
Mount Sinai (Ras Safsafah).....	37	Pruning-saw, Pocket-knife, Hoe, and Mattock.....	102
Public Fountain at Jerusalem.....	42	Sakkieh, or Well-wheel.....	104
Woman carrying Water.....	43	Pigeon-houses.....	107
Ancient and Modern Water-pitchers....	44	Common Pigeon of Palestine.....	108
One of the Wells of Beer-sheba, with its Watering-troughs.....	47	Watchman's Booth.....	109
Well at Thyatira, built of ancient Marbles Tank or Pool of Bethesda, Jerusalem....	49	Oriental Spade and Roman Bepalium....	114
Interior of a Cistern near Aleppo.....	51	Pyrghos, Koolah, or Tower in the Vine- yard.....	117
Cistern under the Temple area at Jeru- salem.....	51	Modern Wine-press.....	118
Perpendicular Plan of Rock Cistern at Tocat.....	52	Ancient Egyptian Wine-press.....	118
Saracenic Aqueduct over the Meles, near Smyrna.....	54	Oriental Baskets.....	120
Water Pillars.....	55	Aged Olive-trees.....	127
Ancient and Modern Skin-bottles.....	57	Ancient Olive-press.....	129
Wooden Water-jug.....	57	Women working at the Olive-press....	130
Coin of Apamea.....	58	Modern Clay and Tin Lamps.....	132
Assyrian Warrior swimming on an in- flated Skin.....	58	Ancient Terra-cotta Lamps.....	132
Inflated Skin Raft. From Assyrian Sculpture.....	59	Cedars of Lebanon.....	154
Modern Kelek, with Tent.....	59	Oriental Woodman's Axe.....	155
Ancient Kufa.....	60	The Apple of Sodom.....	159
Modern Kufa.....	60	Valonea Acorn.....	159
Oriental Ships.....	61	Stone-pine Cone and Nuts.....	163
Shell-fish eaten in the Levant.....	68	The Lily of the Field—Meadow Anemone	166
Ancient Egyptian Drag-net.....	70	The Opium Poppy.....	167
Assyrian Swimmer. From an ancient Sculpture.....	72	Buffaloes in Palestine.....	176
Modern Plow, Share, Yoke, Mattock, and Goad.....	76	Wild Ox of Central Asia.....	177
Arab Farmer plowing.....	76	Chase of the Wild Ox, or Reem.....	178
Ox-cart bearing Sheaves.....	79	Mouflon, or Wild Sheep of Western Asia.....	180
Oriental Ox-cart.....	80	Shepherd playing on the Naj, or Flute..	187
Cart of the ancient Tokhari.....	81	Ancient Sling.....	188
Oxen treading the Corn.....	82	Native Haversack, or Sachel, made of an entire Lamb-skin.....	189
Threshing-floor.....	82	Oriental Shepherd-dog.....	191
Tares.....	84	Shepherd-dog. From Babylonian Sculp- ture.....	192
The Hand-mill.....	87	The Broad-tailed Sheep in Persia 2500 Years ago.....	195
A public Oven.....	89	Broad-tailed Sheep, unshorn.....	196
Portable Ovens: Ancient and Modern..	90	Broad-tailed Sheep, shorn.....	197
		The Broad-tailed Sheep, according to Harris.....	198
		Etruscan Sheep. From a Vase.....	199
		Four-horned Ram.....	200
		The Paseng, or Wild Goat of Western Asia.....	202

	PAGE		PAGE
The Teflik, or Angora Goat.....	203	Sennacherib on his Throne. An Assyrian Sculpture.....	343
Milking a Goat. From a Babylonish Gem.....	207	Mar Yohanan.....	347
The modern Arab Horse.....	209	The Emir B'shir Shehâb, Prince of the Lebanon.....	349
Koordish and Koordish Cavalry... <i>faces</i>	215	The Arab Emir, Ab'd-el-Kadir.....	351
The modern Arab Horse.....	218	Heads of Captives held by Rameses II., King of Egypt. Sculpture at Abou Simbel, B.C. 1300.....	353
Sculptured Horse at Persepolis.....	218	Captive of Rameses III., B.C. 1170.....	354
Woman riding sideways. From a Vase found at Ruvo, in Italy.....	223	King of Judah. An Egyptian Sculpture	355
Assyrian Women riding astride on a Mule.....	224	Samaritan Hebrews bearing Tribute. An Assyrian Sculpture.....	356
Eastern Litter.....	226	Jewish Captives. An Assyrian Sculpture.....	357
Ass Colt pursued by a Hound.....	229	The Abyssinian Chief, Belgadda-Arca.....	361
Ass with "Egyptian Saddle." From Beni-Hassan.....	230	Ancient Persian. A Persepolitan Sculpture.....	364
Bactrian Camel, seen in Asia Minor.....	234	Ancient Persian.....	365
Bactrian Camels. From the Nimrood Obelisk.....	235	Armenian Merchant, Costume of fifty Years ago.....	368
Foot and Stomach of the Camel.....	237	Georgian of Tiflis.....	370
Head of a Camel.....	238	Circassian Warrior.....	371
Overworked Camel.....	241	Oriental Gypsy with the Gypsy Lock....	373
Claw at the end of the Lion's Tail. Assyrian Sculpture.....	243	Turkish Lady in modern Costume.....	373
Maneless Lion at Euyuk, in Asia Minor. —Side View.....	249	Greek Gentleman in his Native Costume.....	374
Front View of the Same.....	249	Arabic Running-hand: the Language Turkish, with the Seal instead of a Signature.....	392
The Kaïm Hürmül, in Cæle-Syria.....	255	Modern Seals.....	393
Carvings on the Kaïm Hürmül.....	256	Ancient Seal Impression on Clay.....	394
The Roebuck of Western Asia.....	259	Sealed Letter, Penknife, Scissors, and Pen.....	397
Bear, from an Assyrian brass Bowl.....	260	Turkmen's Tent.....	400
Household Articles found in an Ancient Dunghill.....	267	Ancient Tent. Assyrian Sculpture.....	400
Vulture carrying off the Entrails of the Slain. A Nineveh Sculpture.....	268	Arab Tent.....	401
The long-tailed Magpie.....	269	Tent-pin, or Hook, and Mallet (Ancient and Modern).....	401
The Rashama, or "Bird of Pharaoh"....	270	Wooden Mortar and Pestle.....	404
The Crow of Western Asia.....	271	Babylonian baked Brick, with Nebuchadnezzar's Name: 12 Inches square and 3 Inches thick.....	419
The Asiatic Hyena.....	271	Village with conical Roofs, near Aleppo	423
Jackal. Syrian Fox.....	279	Ancient Assyrian House.....	424
The Jerboa.....	285	Projecting Fronts of Houses, Damascus.	427
The Ferret.....	286	Council-chamber at Tocat.....	428
Oriental Swallows and Nest.....	288	Inner Court of a House in Damascus....	430
The Crane.....	290	A Man carrying his Keys.....	432
The Oriental Quail.....	292	Gypsum Alcove.....	434
Site of the second Miracle of Quails....	296	Ceiling Ornament in Gypsum.....	435
A Pair of Turtle-doves.....	298	The Law on the Door-post.....	435
The Titmouse and its Nest.....	300	A Summer-house, of Wood, at Tocat....	445
The Eastern Oriole.....	301	Wall of Jerusalem.....	448
The Hoopoe.....	301	Tower at Ramleh.....	449
The Rock Partridge.....	302	The Jaffa Gate (anciently the Fish Gate) at Jerusalem.....	451
The Stork and its Nest.....	302	The Strait Gate.....	453
The Chameleon and its Tongue.....	312	A Street in Damascus.....	456
The Asiatic Locust.....	313	Plan of an Oriental Room.....	460
Locusts. From a Babylonian Gem.....	314	Oriental Chairs and Stool.....	461
The Rose-colored Starling.....	316		
Flight of Locusts in Southern Russia....	317		
Silk-worm, Cocoon, Larva, Butterfly, and Eggs.....	321		
Mahmood II. and Attendants..... <i>faces</i>	337		
Modern Oriental Jews: left, Asia Minor; right, Persia.....	340		

	PAGE		PAGE
An Upper Window.....	462	The ancient Salaam, or Temennah, in	
Mangal, or Chating-dish, for Charcoal...	464	Egypt and Persia.....	591
Oriental Kitchen-range.....	465	The Servant's Hands before his Mas-	
Kitchen Utensils.....	466	ter.....	593
Ladies: Ancient and Modern.....	466	Jeweled Censers.....	594
Two Men pounding in one Mortar. Eryp-		Rose-water Bottle.....	595
tian Sculpture.....	467	Ancient Modes of Sitting like the Mod-	
Coffee-pot and Cups.....	468	ern.....	598
Earthen Jars and Water-pots.....	469	Ancient Egyptians at Dinner.....	601
Ancient Jar.....	489	The modern Zornà and Davool.....	608
Common Table and Tray.....	472	The modern Darabukkeh.....	609
Village Table.....	472	Ancient Musicians and Showmen enter-	
Collation wicker Table.....	472	taining Workmen.....	609
Servant bringing Dishes.....	474	Oriental Bagpipe.....	610
The Oriental Cup.....	475	Ancient Egyptian military Music.....	611
The Assyrian Cup.....	475	The Nay (Flute), and Case.....	611
Basin and Ewer.....	476	Ancient Egyptian Performer on the	
Candlesticks.....	478	Nay.....	612
Hanging Lamps.....	479	The Tamboora, or Lute.....	612
Plan of an Oriental public Bath.....	484	The Ood, or Guitar.....	613
Interior of an Oriental Bath.....	486	The Kemenjeh, or Violin.....	614
Ancient Bathing.....	490	The Kanoon, or Santür.....	615
An Oriental Gentleman.....	509	The Tambourine, or Timbrel.....	615
Weapons carried in the Girdle.....	514	Oriental brass Castanets.....	615
Ancient Girdles.....	515	Assyrian and Egyptian Tambourine-	
Modern Oriental Head-dresses.....	518	players.....	616
Ancient Turbans.....	520	An Oriental Orchestra.....	618
Oriental Shoes, Boots, and Clogs.....	522	Ancient Egyptians singing.....	620
Muslim Lady in the Harim—the Jacket.....	524	Dancing to the clapping of Hands.....	624
Frontlet worn by Ladies.....	526	An Egyptian Alneh.....	626
The Law upon the Forehead.....	527	Ancient Egyptian Alnehs.....	628
The Lebanon Horn.....	528	Putting out the Eyes of a Prisoner.....	635
Various Head-jewels of married Women.....	530	Hall of Audience of the Shah of Persia..	639
Jewish Horn at Algiers.....	530	Pharaoh upon his Throne.....	640
Eastern Necklaces.....	532	Throne of the Shah of Persia at Tehe-	
Lady's portable Looking-glass.....	534	ran.....	642
“ “ “ —back of Mirror.....	535	The Sultan's Throne at Constantinople.....	643
Veiled Woman.....	537	Mahmood Shah, of Persia.....	646
The bridal Crown, or Dodos.....	640	Bowing to the King.....	648
Ancient Dodos.....	547	Adoring the Assyrian King: the State	
Marriage Procession.....	550	Umbrella.....	649
Ancient Terra-cotta Lamps and Oil Ves-		Egyptian Prostration.....	649
sels.....	554	Oriental Guns.....	671
Ancient and Modern Egyptian Mode of		Oriental Pistols.....	672
carrying little Children.....	563	Cotton-mailed Cavalry of Begharmi, in	
Ancient Egyptian Women spinning.....	564	Central Africa.....	673
Modern Oriental Spinning-wheel.....	564	Turkish Helmet.....	674
Oriental Distaff.....	565	Modern Turkish and Ancient Assyrian	
An Oriental Cradle.....	569	Helmets.....	674
Bells fastened to a Child's Ankle.....	570	Ancient and Modern Shields.....	675
Ancient baptismal Font at Ephesus.....	572	Modern Oriental Weapons.....	678
Children's ancient Terra-cotta Toys.....	573	Parthian and Assyrian Cavalry.....	682
Ancient Terra-cotta Flageolet.....	574	The Ring in the Nose.....	688
Stone Door of Sepulchre.....	580	Fire-altar at Nakhshi-Rustam.....	700
Seal on Tomb-door.....	581	Fire-temple near Bakoo.....	701
Oriental Graves.....	582	Bronze Ashtaroth.....	706
Tomb of Polycarp at Smyrna.....	583	Jupiter Corypcean, Smyrna. Ancient	
Parsee Cemetery.....	585	Terra Cotta.....	706
Ancient Mourning: laying the Hand		Terra-cotta Statue of Boodh. Discov-	
upon the Head, and crying.....	586	ered in an ancient Tomb at Smyrna..	707
Ancient Tear-bottles.....	587	Ear-ring, with Cupid.....	707

	PAGE		PAGE
Koordish bronze Cock.....	710	Performance of the Whirling Dervishes.....	762
Druse Calf, of Bronze.....	711	Self-torture of Religious Devotee.....	766
The Caaba, or Temple at Mecca.....	715	Muslim Devotee cutting himself like the	
The Mihrab, Pulpit, and Candlestick in		Prophets of Baal.....	769
the Mosk.....	719	Merchant's Shop in Cairo.....	777
Pulpit in the Mosk of the Metuallies,		An Oriental Café.....	779
Cairo.....	721	Ancient Razor-blade and Beads.....	781
Candlestick. From a Gem found at		Street in the Bazar at Cairo.....	782
Ephesus.....	722	Lid of Sarcophagus. From the Tombs	
Mosk Fountain.....	723	of the Kings of Judah.....	785
Greek Priest.....	732	Gate-way of Medreseh, at Sivas.....	788
Armenian Bishop, with Hood.....	733	Ancient Egyptian Drill.....	792
Whirling Dervish.....	733	Modern Carpenters' and Masons' Tools.....	793
Begging Dervish.....	734	Interior of a Caravanseray, or Inn.....	804

COLORED MAPS.

PHYSICAL MAP OF BIBLE LANDS.....	<i>faces Part I.</i>
ETHNOLOGICAL MAP OF BIBLE LANDS.....	<i>faces Part II.</i>



An Arab Chief.

PART I.



CUSTOMS WHICH HAVE THEIR ORIGIN IN THE
PHYSICAL FEATURES OF BIBLE LANDS.



THE BIBLE CUSTOMS OF BIBLE LANDS.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE IN GENERAL, AND OF PALESTINE IN PARTICULAR.

NO study of the East can be thorough and satisfactory which is not based upon the knowledge of its geography, or, in other words, its physical features. Our first step, therefore, in these interesting investigations must be to call the reader's attention to our "Physical Map of Bible Lands," and to guide him in the study of its most important features.

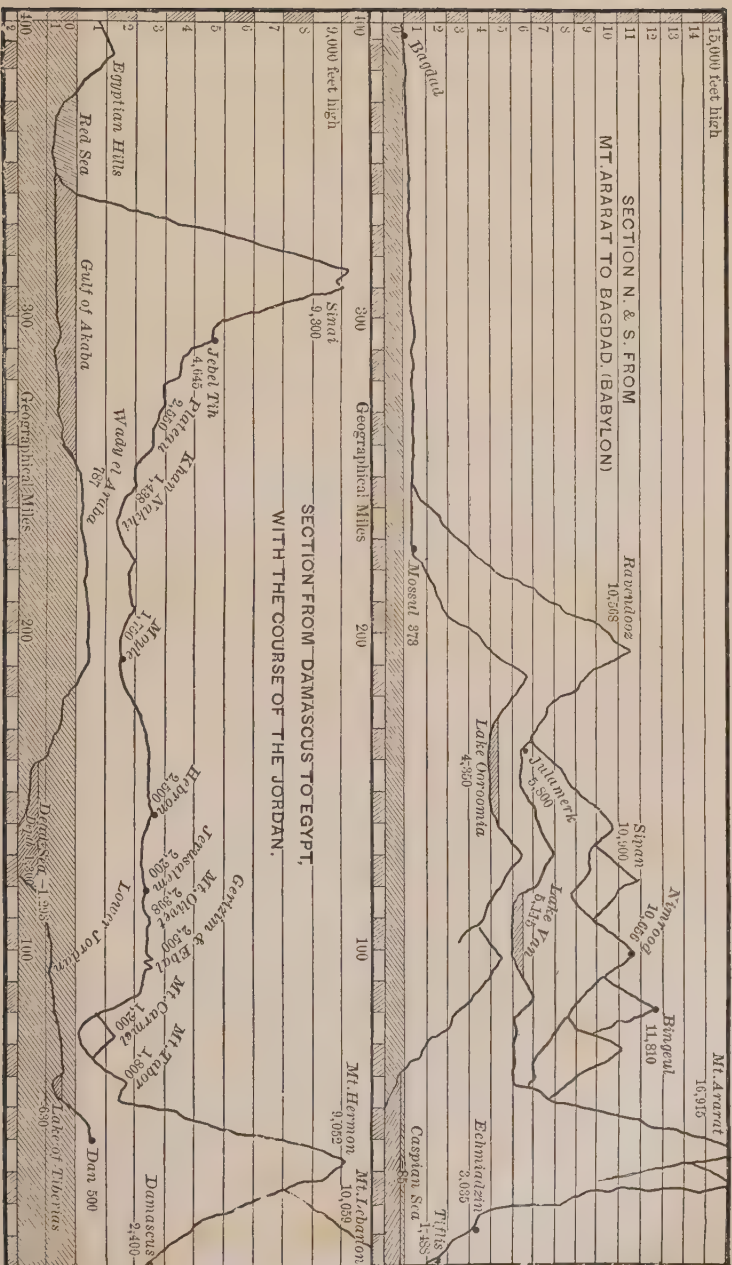
The land portion of this map, it will be observed, is colored with three different tints—green, red, and white—indicating three different degrees of elevation above the level of the sea. The *green* represents the alluvial lands, which do not exceed 1000 feet in height; the *red* indicates an elevation of 1000 to 8000 feet; and the *white* every thing above the last-mentioned height, necessarily comprising only lofty mountains and mountain ranges.

The first peculiarity that arrests our attention in the study of the map is the comparative isolation of this region of country from the rest of the world. It lies, indeed, in the very centre of the Eastern hemisphere, in the heart of three continents; yet it is bounded and surrounded by no less than five seas, which, during the early ages of our race, must have served the purpose of so many ditches, or *fosses*, around a castle, while the comparatively narrow spaces which separate them form rugged defenses of the cradle of the human race. But let us examine more particularly these encircling natural barriers.

The "stormy Euxine," or Black Sea, nearly destitute of har-

bors on its southern and eastern coasts, occupies the north-west corner, and the Caspian, a low marshy lake, lying eighty-five feet below sea-level, and always neglected of men, bounds the land on the north-east. Between these two seas stretches the great wall of the Caucasian range, rising at Mount Elboorz to a height of 18,500 feet, and covered in many parts with perpetual snow. It can be crossed only at the "Iron Gate," through the defile of Dariel, in the centre, and at the two extremities. The Persian Gulf occupies the south-eastern corner of the map, while the space between its shores and those of the Caspian Sea is blocked up by the lofty ranges of Zaghhros and Demawend, and further guarded by the deserts of Iran. From the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea, whose navigation has ever been unsafe, lies the great Arabian Desert—dry, sandy, practicable only for the hardy Arab, and forming a plateau averaging 2000 feet in height. The Isthmus of Suez, on the south-west, is but a hundred miles in width, and consists of a sandy tract broken only by a salt-water marsh. Lastly, the broad Mediterranean spreads out upon the west and passes on to the *Ægean*, thickly studded with rocky islands, and thence to the Propontis and the Euxine. Here we have a series of defensive moats, as it were: these are the straits of the Dardanelles and those of the Bosphorus; and there is yet a third at the entrance to the Sea of Azof, which is now called the Straits of Kertch. Thus we see that the spot selected by Divine Providence for the birth of our race, and the earliest experiments of human life and society, was isolated yet central—isolated, that the experiments might be less liable to disturbance, and central, that hence the world might be peopled, civilized, and Christianized.

But we must point out another feature illustrated by our map. The figures which mark the exact elevations of the land above the sea indicate that there is a plateau, averaging about 4000 feet in height, and varying from 150 to 300 miles in width, which runs almost exactly east and west, though at its eastern end it is deflected toward the south by the Caspian Sea. On the west it comprises the whole peninsula of Asia Minor; in the centre, Koordistan and Armenia; and eastward the kingdom of Persia. This plateau, however, has not a uniform level surface, but presents a great variety of forms, from the lofty



peak and mountain to the fertile valley and fruitful plain. The average elevation of 4000 feet is that of the level ground, and not of the mountains; these are so lofty along the edges of the plateau as to make it appear higher than it really is. The culminating or highest part of this plateau consists of a plain, surrounded by a complete circle of mountains, beneath which it lies in its rich livery of green, with the Lake of Van occupying the centre, like a jewel in its casket. The surface of the lake is 5115 feet above the sea-level. From this region four great rivers flow to three of the neighboring seas: the Fazi to the Euxine, the Aras to the Caspian, and the Tigris and Euphrates to the Persian Gulf.* They all carry fertility to the lands through which they flow. Ancient traditions place the province of Eden in this highest portion of Armenia, anciently called Ararat; and it appears to furnish all the conditions of the Mosaic narrative. This also seems to have been the site of the Noachian deluge, whose waters were gradually drained off by the streams to the lower grounds. No trace now appears of such a cataclysm, nor could any be looked for. The accompanying vertical cut will give a clearer idea of this region; it extends from the valley of the Aras and Tiflis, on the right, to Bagdad, or Babylon, in Mesopotamia, on the left, and exhibits the positions of the lakes of Ooroomia and Van, and of Mount Ararat, Ravendooz, and some other peaks.

The plateau we have described contains every variety of climate and production to be found in the temperate zone. It even possesses its own deserts of sand or salt, as in Iran and the centre of Asia Minor.

We shall not speak of the steppes or of the alluvial lands which lie to the north of the great plateau, for they are scarcely alluded to in the Scriptures; but on the south there are two alluvial plains of great fertility, created by the rivers that still enrich them, which invite our attention. The one lies south of the great plateau, and under its shelter: it is watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris; and much of it lying between these rivers, it has received the name of Mesopotamia. It has been occupied at different periods by some of the most renowned dynasties, *i. e.*, those of Assyria and Chaldea in Scripture times;

* Gen. ii., 10-14.

while at a later period it has constituted the chief wealth of the Persian, Alexandrian, Parthian, and Saracen empires, until reduced to an almost unbroken desert by the iron heel of the Turk.

The other plain lies just within the limits of an adjacent continent. It is the land of the Pharaohs, the rich valley of the Nile, from five to fifty miles in width and five hundred and fifty in length, the site of one of the earliest and most wonderful seats of civilization, which has played no mean part in the Biblical drama.

Between Egypt and Mesopotamia lies the little land of Canaan, or Israel—Palestine, the chief scene of Bible history, and the most interesting spot on the face of the earth. To this we must now turn our attention, and consider some of its physical peculiarities.

The first thing likely to impress one, in looking at Palestine upon the map, is its small size. How strange that so diminutive a land should have played so important a part in the world's history! But this fact stands not alone. Greece, Switzerland, and Holland are also small, but have done great and memorable deeds. Some have doubted whether Palestine could support a population of three millions even in David's time, when its limits were the broadest, and it had become the *entrepôt* of the commerce of India.* Computing the surface of the land at 11,200 geographical square miles, we have an average of 267 souls to the square mile, whereas prosperous Great Britain has but 246. It should, however, be remembered that England possesses large tracts of unproductive soil belonging to a favored class. German Bohemia, though hilly, supports a population of 254 to the square mile, while the fertile alluvial plains of Belgium feed no less than 438. Modern China supports 288. There are no data by which we can estimate the present population of Palestine, but we are safe in saying that every country of Western Asia has greatly deteriorated in fertility during the last twelve centuries. Egypt, according to Herodotus, anciently contained seven millions of inhabitants; yet its present population is but two and a half millions.† Babylonia was once the most fertile spot upon the face of the

* 1 Chron. xxi., 5.

† Lane, i., 27-29.

earth. According to Strabo, barley produced three hundred fold; and Pliny states that there were two crops of wheat a year. This was accomplished by a system of irrigation which converted the entire plain between the two rivers, as well as the outer banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris below Nineveh, into a continuous garden, supporting a numerous population of well-to-do farmers and gardeners, the source and secret of the prosperity and power of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires.* But now this whole region is little more than a desert. The yearly incursions of the Arabs compel the inhabitants to seek the protection of the walled towns, whose governors more slowly, but as surely, rob them of their little all. The land lies uncultivated, and the canals are choked and obliterated. This explains the depopulation and ruin of all the countries bordering upon the desert. The Turkish Government purchases a truce from the Bedawy sheikhs by the payment of a yearly tribute; this, however, does not prevent private parties of marauders from scouring the country and carrying off every thing movable.

But we must look at some other features of the Land of Israel. The most interesting of these is the course of the Jordan, which flows through a deep and most remarkable trench, extending in a straight line from the foot of Mount Hermon to the Gulf of Akaba, on the Red Sea. The vertical section of Palestine, from north to south, and across the Red Sea to the African hills, will throw light upon this subject. The Jordan bursts forth from the side of Hermon, 1700 feet above the Mediterranean, though one of its springs is lower down, at the site of the ancient Dan. Its mouth, where it enters the Dead Sea, at a distance of 120 miles from its source, lies 1300 feet below the Mediterranean; so that the entire descent of this river, most appropriately called "the Descender," amounts to no less than 3000 feet! Two lakes lie in its path; the higher and smaller is Lake Merom, the modern Hooleh, all grown over with the papyrus reed.† The Jordan, issuing thence, rushes through a rocky chasm into the beautiful harp-shaped Lake of Chinnereth, or Gennesaret, twelve miles in length by six in breadth, whose surface is 630 feet lower than the sea, while its depth is in

* Rawlinson's Herodotus, i., 267.

† Macgregor, 306, Map.

some places no less than 200 feet; so that, were it drained of its waters, it would present a chasm 800 feet lower than the sea, and 3000 feet below the mountains of Naphthali, near its western shore. The Jordan descends 700 feet more before it reaches the Dead Sea, which lies 1300 feet below the Mediterranean, and about 4000 feet lower than Jerusalem.

The Dead Sea deserves its name. It resembles the crater of a volcano, partially filled up by a lake of bitter waters, whose level is but slightly raised by the "swellings of Jordan" in the spring season, and beneath whose surface lies a depth, in some places, of more than 1300 feet; so that the lowest part of the entire chasm lies 2600 feet below sea-level, and 5000 feet lower than the Mount of Olives, less than fifteen miles from its shores!

But the chasm ends not here. A narrow valley (Araba) extends in a straight line from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba, and this valley nowhere rises higher than 787 feet above the sea. The entire distance from the foot of Hermon to the mouth of the Gulf of Akaba is 603 miles.

But what bearing has this description of the Jordan upon the Scripture history? Much, every way. The fact, however, to which we desire now to call attention is the following: The land of God's chosen people must occupy a central position in the then civilized portion of the world.* But the mighty empires which surrounded them would long ago have obliterated every vestige of a divine revelation had not the physical features of the land afforded, for many centuries, an effectual defense against all the foes of the Hebrews. It is a hilly country, easily guarded by footmen against the cavalry and chariots of Egypt and Assyria. The Jordan, fordable only in two places, formed, with its lakes, the strongest line of defense eastward. On the south and south-west lay the dry and thirsty desert defending the approaches from Egypt; while the Mediterranean offered no secure landing-place to an enemy from the west. The passes between the mountains and the sea on the north were defended by the ever-friendly Tyrians and Sidonians, and the entrance into Cœle-Syria, between Lebanon and Hermon, could easily be held by hardy mountaineers.

* Ezek. v., 5.

But the eastern approaches of the Land of Israel were not guarded by the Jordan alone; for the chief danger that threatened the commonwealth always lay in the direction of Mesopotamia. Two and a half tribes were posted on the other side of the Jordan, in a rugged and hilly region; and their occupation as herdsmen and shepherds fitted them to be a hardy vanguard, ever on the watch, and at the post of danger. Beyond these lay the great Arabian Desert, while the famous Lijah constituted a detached fort, an outpost almost impregnable to any foe. This consists of a "lava bed" of basalt—a dike or field of black rock, rising suddenly to a height of thirty feet, pear-shaped, twenty-two miles long by fourteen wide—made up of boulders thrown together in the utmost confusion, and surrounded by the verdure of the wilderness. Here were the sixty giant cities of Bashan, hewn out of the rock; they are still standing, as though vacated but yesterday.* Here was the stronghold of Og and his compeers, whence they waged war upon the surrounding region, and, in case of defeat, retreated to their almost impregnable fortress.† Hither Absalom fled and hid himself after the murder of his brother Amnon.‡ And to this day it is the asylum of outlaws and refugees from Turkish tyranny.

Let us now consider the general appearance of Palestine as it strikes the western traveler when he first sets his eyes upon it. It is broken up into mountains, hills, and valleys, while an almost unbroken plain extends along the sea-shore, and runs across from the sea to the Jordan valley. The mountains are sometimes lofty, as Lebanon and Hermon on the north, reaching nearly 10,000 feet in height. They are often barren and rocky, but there is evidence that the lesser heights at least were anciently terraced, and covered with plantations of vineyards, olive-trees, and cereals. A process has, however, been going on for many centuries, which has changed into naked and craggy heights the hills once covered with soil and verdure. The original soil was supported in its place by the roots of the trees and shrubs which grew upon them. These were gradually cut down, and the cultivated earth was then sustained by means of stone walls, forming the fruitful terraces

* Deut. iii., 4.

† Numb. xxi., 33-35.

‡ 2 Sam. xiii., 28, 29, 37.

which still adorn Mount Lebanon. As the country was visited with long protracted wars, which destroyed a large portion of the population, these walls were neglected and gave way before the winter rains, which swept the soil into the plains beneath. At a certain period in history, powerful tribes of nomads began to roam over the land, and continue to this day. It is their practice to set fire to the shrubs and forests in the autumn, in order to insure a larger crop of grass for their flocks in the spring. Thus the soil is carried into the plains by the rains, while the hills are converted into rocky wastes. The springs of water are dried up, and the rain diminishes as the forests disappear. This ruinous process still goes on in Western Asia, and it would require centuries of a different course to repair the injury thus inflicted on the land. It is within the memory of men still living that the island of Syra in the *Ægean* was covered with forests: it has now become, in the manner described, a barren rock, with only one small spring of water. The people of Malta now import soil from Sicily for the raising of vegetables, while in the days of Paul it possessed trees and even forests.*

The foregoing statements explain the fulfillment of the curse pronounced by Moses against Israel, in case of disobedience: "The whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning—it *is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein*, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim!"†

We have every reason to believe that, during the early historic times, Palestine was covered with primeval forests, as is still the case with many other parts of Western Asia. And during the period of the Old Testament narrative forests were certainly more common than now; groves crowned the summits of many hills, which were cut down by the divine command, because they had become the seats of idolatrous worship.‡ Such groves may yet be seen in other portions of Western Asia, and the people at the present day, especially the remnants of heathen tribes, associate with them ideas of superstitious reverence, and even perform religious rites around some venerated tree, or at the shrine of a reputed saint there

* Acts xxviii., 3, 8.

† Deut. xxix., 23.

‡ Deut. vii., 5; xvi., 21; 2 Kings xviii., 4; xxiii., 14; 2 Chron. xiv., 3.

interred. The piles of sticks surrounding some of these trees are the offerings of superstition, and happy does the man esteem himself who can carry off a twig or a branch to be preserved as a talisman. The "wood of Ephraim," where Absalom lost his life, perished long ago. Carmel and Lebanon evidently once waved with forests, and the noble cedars, now limited to two or three small localities, must have been a common tree at a former age. Still we may presume that the general characteristics of the country have remained unchanged from the days of Joshua. We have the distinct features of plain and hill, the former smooth, and rich with the alluvial soil which has been washed down the latter; while the hills, being formed almost exclusively of limestone, are, by the industry of the inhabitants, covered with terraces supported by stone walls, which keep the loose soil from being carried away by the rains. The plains produce cereals, mostly wheat and barley. These are also grown on the hill-sides; but the chief products of the latter are the vine, the fig, the olive, mulberry, and other fruit-trees. The more inaccessible hills, and such of the low lands as can not be cultivated, are used as pasturing-grounds for sheep, goats, and larger cattle.*

It is worthy of note that in Western Asia no tree is planted or even allowed to grow, unless its fruit commends it to the care of man. Fuel being scarce, all other trees are cut down:† the poplar alone may be excepted, whose tall trunk is needed for house-building. It is still customary, however, to plant trees of various kinds by the graves of the dead, and no person would venture to cut them down.

Solitary trees also, not fruit-bearing, are left to grow on some spot where the weary traveler seeks the shelter of their shade, or slakes his thirst at a well or spring of water. These last are usually the oak, the platanus or plane tree, and the terebinth, all of which grow to a great size, and afford refreshing shade to a large company.

Such solitary and venerable trees are often seen on the outskirts or within the limits of villages; an extensive platform surrounds the trunk, the soil having been trodden hard by the feet of many generations. Here grave councils are held, and

* *Psa.* lxx., 13.† *Matt.* vii., 12.

here also occur the chief festivities on the occasion of a marriage or other causes of rejoicing, the company being seated upon little mats or rugs, the musicians filling the air with the shrill sound of their instruments, and the dancers often circling the tree, as they hold each other's hands: here also funeral rites are performed. The reader will find many such trees referred to in the Bible, but we merely remind him of Abraham's tree, probably a terebinth, underneath whose shade the patriarch entertained the angels;* the oak which was by Shechem;† the oak under which was buried the nurse of Rebekah,‡ and the juniper-tree where Elijah was refreshed by the angel on his way to "Horeb, the mount of God."§

What we have now said of the general features of the country will serve to explain many statements, otherwise dark, which are met with in the Scriptures. All the houses were built—as they are still—of sun-dried bricks or of stone, whether hewn or united in the rough state with mud or mortar. Timber has now become even more scarce than anciently. From the want of beams and rafters which once supported the roofs the latter have to be arched, which peculiarity is strikingly seen in all large pictures of modern Jerusalem. It is a city of domes.

There was no such thing as a wooden house except for a king, and Solomon's house of forty-five cedar pillars, and cedar beams upon them,|| must have been more wonderful to the people than if built of marble, not merely on account of the quality of the wood, but from its being built wholly of timber. Then, too, as has already been observed, fuel was and still is scarce.

We see also how it was that foreign conquerors could subdue the people of the plains, while the inhabitants of the hills successfully maintained their independence. The dreaded war-chariots could not climb the rocky, roadless steep. With the advance of civilization good roads crossed the hills in every direction, and the cavalry of the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman invaders met with no resistance outside of the "fenced cities;" and a

* Gen. xviii., 4.

† Gen. xxxv., 4; Josh. xxiv., 25, 26.

‡ Gen. xxxv., 8

§ 1 Kings xix., 4.

|| 1 Kings vii., 2, 3.

four-wheeled *diligence* now regularly plies between Jaffa and Jerusalem.

The climate of Palestine is mild and salubrious. The want of forests renders it liable to occasional droughts, and this liability is doubtless enhanced by the near vicinity of regions where rain never falls, such as Arabia-Petræa and Upper Egypt. Showers come from the Mediterranean, while the steady rains follow the line of Hermon and Lebanon. Snow is a phenomenon of rare occurrence. It is, however, seen in winter, resting on both the above-mentioned heights, and is found in shaded spots in summer; while the heat of the latter season is tempered, especially in the hill country of Judæa, by the rush of the atmosphere of the Mediterranean toward the seething caldron of the Dead Sea. But during the months of July and August, when the inundation of the Nile covers Egypt with water, a cool breeze prevails in Palestine from the south-west, which is only occasionally exchanged for the stifling siroccos blowing from the desert.

A word respecting the main features of the other lands of the Bible to which the reader's attention will be called in the course of the present work. Egypt, as already stated, is a portion of the valley of the Nile, extending five hundred and fifty miles southward from the shores of the Mediterranean. It is closed in on the west and east by arid sands and barren mountains, and owes its fertility to the yearly overflowings of the Nile. This river empties itself into the Mediterranean by several mouths, which encompass the most fertile portion of the land, in shape resembling an equilateral triangle, and called the Delta, or Lower Egypt. At Alexandria, on the sea-shore, there are forty days rain during the whole year; there are five days at Cairo above the Delta, and none at all at the first cataracts.

Syria may be called the continuation of Palestine. It occupies the upper or northern half of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean; its southern portion includes the northern part of the mountain ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, with the plain of Damascus; then northward comes the plain of Antioch, branching off to the low shore of Seleucia in the west, and reaching out eastward to the desert; north of this is Mount Amanus and Mesopotamia.

Asia Minor is an irregular parallelogram, pushing out westward from the Asiatic continent. It is a part of the great plateau we have already described, whose edges are worn down by storms and streams, and have formed low, irregular, alluvial plains all around its margin. This plateau is crossed from west to east by two irregular chains of mountains, Taurus on the south, and Anti-taurus on the north, which advance eastward almost to the Caspian Sea; their eastern portion is called Koordistan and Armenia. Finally, the great Caucasian chain, stretching across from the Caspian to the Black Seas, forms an almost impenetrable barrier to the north.

The countries we have thus briefly outlined are doubtless the most interesting portions of the earth's surface. It would be difficult to say whether their scenery is most remarkable for its beauty, its grandeur, or its extraordinary variety. The climate is salubrious, and so temperate with respect to both heat and cold as to produce the most perfect intellectual and physical development of man, and even of the brute creation. It is, moreover, the portion of the world which has been longest occupied by the human race, and to which belong by far the fullest and the most startling pages of history. Its surface is everywhere studded with remains of the human industry of more than six thousand years. A wonderfully large number of races and nations have there sought immortality by their own works, or by destroying the works of others. The remains of cities, of temples, palaces, and fortifications are met with on every hand, each telling its own tale. In Egypt, imperishable granite speaks of races long gone by. There, as well as in Palestine and Lower Mesopotamia, "tells" or mounds of stupendous size, and built of brick by human hands, point to a history still farther back, which we are just beginning to decipher; while in Asia Minor, the most ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, and Grecian remains lie side by side with monuments and epitaphs in languages yet unknown, and with pyramids of sun-dried bricks, whose hidden treasures are yet to tell a tale of long gone ages.

To these interesting features we must add that which, to the Christian, is the most thrilling of all—the history of man's redemption was here enacted. Here patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and protomartyrs, lived, preached, and suffered, and more

than all, here dwelt the Son of God! These lands we have attempted to delineate; others have studied and sketched their ancient remains. They have identified almost every spot mentioned in history, sacred or profane, but they have taken little interest in the present condition of the lands of the Bible; and despising their present population, so dwarfish and degraded by the side of the giants of ancient days, they have determined to forget, and have certainly disregarded, alike their persons and their customs. We have traced a totally different path for ourselves. It is less startling to the imagination. But when the reader has perused these pages, we trust that their picture of the lands of the Bible as they now are, will have thrown much valuable light upon the pages of Holy Writ.

We can not, however, proceed in our plan without a few words on the Topography of the Old and New Testaments, which has reference not only to Palestine and Syria, but to several of the neighboring countries as well. The identification of the spots mentioned in the Scriptures has received much attention on the part of Biblical scholars during the last half-century, and the volumes written on this branch of knowledge form a valuable portion of our literature. No student of the Bible should be ignorant of the most important of these works; but it does not enter into our plan to attempt a discussion or investigation of these matters. As, however, the subject of topography is intimately related to an inquiry into the present condition of Bible lands, as illustrative of the text of Scripture, we can not avoid giving it a brief and general notice.

It is worthy of remark, in the first place, that the land of Palestine, with regard to whose location there never has been a doubt, was eminently adapted for the purposes which God had in view in choosing to himself a peculiar people, and making them the depository of a divine revelation. It is probable that no other spot could be found on the face of the earth equally well fitted for such an object. We must bear in mind that the whole world was devoted to idolatry, and that the chosen people of God would be constantly liable to lose the knowledge of the true God, and imitate the heathen rites of their neighbors; so that they must needs be isolated in their position. This isolation was further rendered necessary by the political condition of the world. During the centuries in

which the Jews occupied Palestine, many dynasties were rising around them by the destruction of their neighbors, and falling in their turn under the blows of a more powerful enemy. The prevailing policy consisted, in many cases, in razing the conquered cities to the ground, putting to the edge of the sword all who were able to bear arms, and carrying away the women and children into hopeless captivity. No one can look upon the map of Palestine, as we have shown, without being struck with its remarkably advantageous position, both for the purpose of isolation and for defense against an invading foe. And the strength of this position is abundantly proved by the history of the Israelites; for they were able to maintain their independence against the two most powerful monarchies of ancient times for the space of seven hundred years; the mighty armies of their enemies, like the locusts in numbers, repeatedly broke over the line of the Jordan, or through the southern desert, and, taking possession of the plain of Esdraelon, cut their little land in two; but they were soon ejected, and the Israelites regained their liberty. Finally, the first to give way were the two and a half tribes that occupied the outposts on the eastern border.* These were followed, only nineteen years later, by the remaining tribes of the kingdom of Israel, at the fall of Samaria, their capital. The mountains of Judea proved an internal fortress, which, after the rest of the country had been wasted, and the inhabitants had been removed, still held its own—though sometimes compelled to pay tribute to its mighty foes—for the space of one hundred and thirty-five years longer. Though conquered by Babylon, the southern kingdom was revived by Cyrus, and did not finally perish until nearly eight hundred years later than the rest of the country, and this under the strong arm of Rome, the mistress of the world.

We remark, again, upon the general subject of Biblical topography, that the Bible is a volume containing a large number of separate books, evidently written by different men, at different and often distant periods of time, extending over two thousand years. Scattered through these books are found descriptions, often minute, of various localities, of towns, villages,

* B.C. 740; 1 Chron. v., 26; comp. with Isa. ix., 1.

buildings, streets, hills, valleys, streams, wells, and other local objects not in the land of Palestine alone, but also in the neighboring countries. Men of talent and learning have for many years been engaged in verifying these statements and in identifying the spots thus described. The discoveries and identifications have been innumerable. Old walls have come to light, streams have been traced, monuments discovered, inscriptions deciphered, mountains, hills, and valleys have been identified, forming a mass of evidence truly wonderful and unprecedented, which has established beyond the shadow of a doubt the authenticity of the books of the Old and New Testaments.

These discoveries and identifications are still going on, and we have reason to believe that many are yet in store to reward the patient labor of the student of the Word. We have yet to learn that any one item of topographical information contained in the Scriptures has, on examination of the ground, proved at fault. We have not seen this fact brought forward as an argument to establish the authenticity of the Scriptures, yet it has always seemed to us one of the most complete and unanswerable, and one which ought to satisfy the mind of every caviler.

It is also worthy of note that these topographical inquiries are nearly always more or less connected with questions of history. In seeking, for instance, to identify a certain locality or certain ruins, we endeavor to decipher an inscription, either entire or fragmentary, which may have been brought to light. These inscriptions often contain the name of the town sought for, and then the evidence is complete; but other particulars come to light at the same time. The inscriptions before us are perhaps not all written in the same language or characters. The record may be either in Greek or in Latin, in Phœnician, hieroglyphic, or the cuneiform character; and this mere fact at once proves that the town in question was once in possession of the people whose written characters are before us—a historical fact frequently of great importance. Again, the characters or letters of a people have differed at different periods of their history, and a mere glance at an inscription will often enable one to form a correct judgment, respecting the period of the world's history to which it belongs. And, finally, the reading of the inscription will often bring to light important facts, or

the names of persons which may be identical with those mentioned in the sacred record. To the first of these categories belong the late important discoveries made at Jerusalem, in the foundations of the Temple area. Large blocks of stone have been found forming the very basis of the artificial platform of Mount Moriah, which have rude marks or characters upon them. Now these characters, upon examination, prove to be Phœnician, which were used by the Hebrews until the captivity, and are corroborative of the statements made,* viz., that Solomon "commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house; and Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them." Solomon employed in the building of the Temple skillful artisans of that nation, as well as Jews, and both people used the same characters.

The late discovery of a monument east of the Dead Sea belongs to the other category of inscriptions above specified. The writing upon it not only proves that the country in which it was discovered was occupied by the people of Moab, but the occurrence of the name of the Moabite king, Mesha, enables us to identify him as the hero of the tragical story narrated in 2 Kings iii., 24-27.

Should we enter, however, upon an account of even the most notable instances of identification, we should be obliged to pass in review the remarkable discoveries made at Nineveh, and others scattered over all the surrounding region. We will only say that coins are even more frequently found than inscriptions among old ruins, and being composed of less perishable materials they are generally in a better state of preservation. They, moreover, contain information upon the very points we seek to elucidate, *i. e.*, the names of the reigning sovereigns, while the best preserved and most elaborate inscriptions often throw no light of any importance upon any subject whatever.

There is yet another mode of identification of which we can fortunately avail ourselves when all other resources fail us. Western Asia has been overrun by various conquerors, who have laid it waste, destroyed its cities, ruined its "pleasant places," and either put to the sword or carried into permanent

* 1 Kings v., 17, 18.

captivity the greatest part of its inhabitants. Many of their ancient rites and customs have been supplanted by others, and the very languages spoken by the aboriginal people have been all but lost, foreign languages being substituted in their stead. But in spite of all these changes, the names of towns, cities, rivers, mountains, and even smaller localities, have generally remained the same, their conquerors having adopted them from the conquered with such changes alone as are required by the genius of the language newly introduced. It is fortunate for the historian and the Biblical scholar that for the original languages of Syria and Palestine a cognate language has been substituted—the Arabic—the best able, on account of its affinity to them, to preserve unchanged the names of places in those interesting regions.

The common Oriental name of Jerusalem at the present day, given to no other city even by Muslims, is *Elkoods*—*the holy*. Now we find this to have been one of its favorite names, both in Old and New Testament times.* The Hebrew shekel (a silver coin worth seventy-five cents) bore the inscription “Jerusalem Kadusha,” or *Jerusalem the Holy*; hence the name of the coin throughout the East was *Kadusha*, and Jerusalem was so called, and by the Greeks *Cadytis*.† We have another instance of this preservation of names in the case of Egypt, which is always called *Misraïm* in the Hebrew Scriptures, after the son of Ham. It is an interesting fact that in the Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, the only name of the land of the Pharaohs is *Misir*. Tyre was anciently called *Zoor*, and is now known in Syria by no other name than *Soor*. Palmyra is a Greek name for *Tadmor*, the ancient Hebrew and the modern Arabic name for the city of palms.‡ As Drs. Smith and Robinson were prosecuting their researches, they one day came, as they supposed, to the vicinity of the ancient Ajalon, and began to inquire of the native Arabs if they knew of such a place. At first they expressed entire ignorance, but soon after one of them suddenly awoke, exclaiming, “*Ayalo! Ayalo!*”—*here it is, close by us*. The Turks are not so correct; for example, whenever they find a word commencing with an S followed

* Neh. xi., 1, 18; Isa. xlvi., 2; lii., 1; Dan. ix., 24; and so likewise Matt. iv., 5; xxvii., 53; Rev. xxi., 2.

† Herodotus, i., 418; ii., 208, 334.

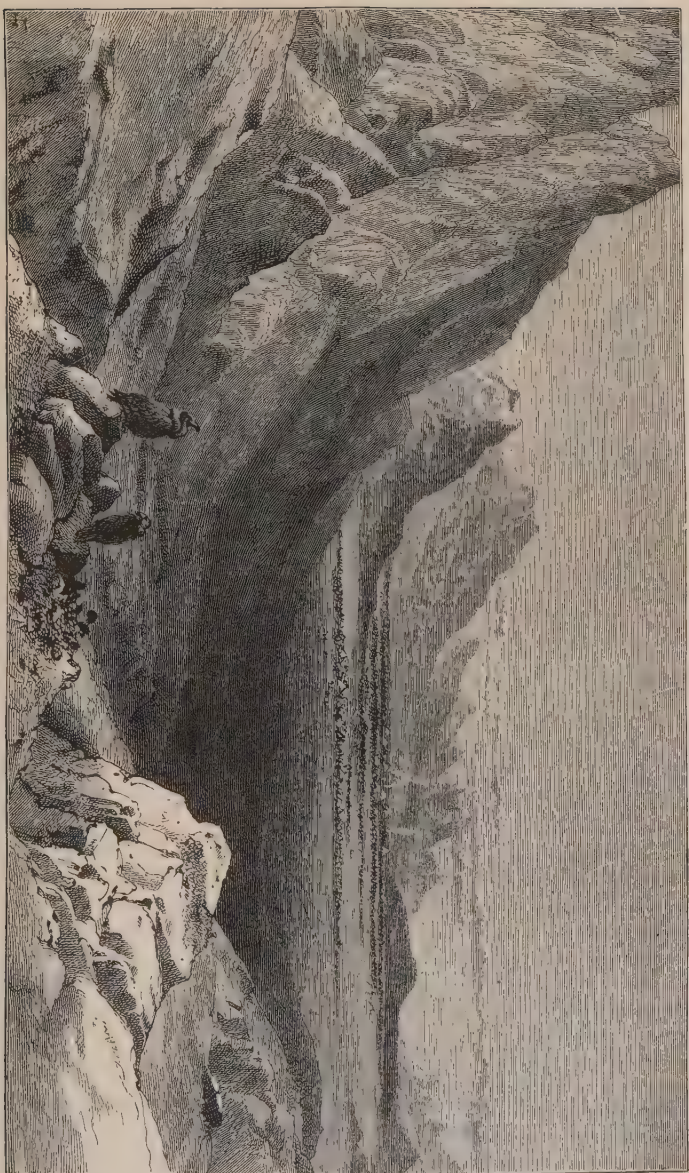
‡ 1 Kings ix., 18.

by a consonant, they prefix an I; thus they change Smyrna into Ismyr, Stavro into Istavro, etc. Sometimes they clip off the final syllable or syllables, and exchange a soft consonant for a hard one; as Pilibé for Philipopolis, and Edirne for Adrianopolis.

One of the circumstances which invests the study of Biblical topography with the highest importance, lies in the fact that a large class of passages in Holy Writ can not be understood, much less fully appreciated in all their power and beauty, without a conscientious examination of sites and localities. Some of the most vexed questions of sacred history have thus, fortunately, been settled forever, for they could be settled in no other manner: they will never come up again, for facts are stern arguments, and localities are among the toughest of facts. The Scriptures are now far better understood than they were before Christian scholars could be induced to leave their quiet studies and pursue their investigations upon the ground. It is thus that the impostures of the monks of the Middle Ages have been exposed, and that, to mention but one instance, the true site of our Lord's crucifixion and burial is being acknowledged to be not at the so-called "Church of the Sepulchre," but at the "Dome of the Rock." It is also by the study of the localities that the erroneous tradition of many ages has been corrected, and the true Sinai has been fully ascertained whereon the divine law was given to man. The spot is so well fitted for the grand and awful scene, that we wonder, on beholding it, or even on gazing upon the accompanying reproduction of a photograph, that a moment's doubt could dwell upon the mind. As we look upon the awful crags of the Ras Safsafah, we can easily picture in our imaginations the whole sublime scene, the hundreds of thousands of Hebrews standing on that vast amphitheatre, while the Holy Mount burns, and smokes, and utters the divine law in peals of thunder. Before such ocular demonstrations, the cavils of unbelievers vanish like the mists of the night, and, "falling upon their faces, they worship God, and confess that he is in us of a truth."*

We must not forget, however, that the science of Biblical topography is yet comparatively in its infancy. "There is yet

* 1 Cor. xiv., 25; Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," pp. 39-44.



Mount Simi (Ras Sufsafch.)

much land to be possessed," both in Palestine and in the surrounding countries; and surely no study can be more attractive or interesting. We believe that many important historical questions will yet be solved, and that it will be done by this kind of investigation. Take, for instance, the question of the Deluge, and the original condition of the human race before that remarkable event occurred. There is a large class of good men and women who conscientiously think it a sort of heresy to suppose there was any limit to the extent of the flood-waters over the earth's surface, just as Galileo was esteemed a heretic for disbelieving that the sun made a daily flight of six hundred millions of miles round the earth. Other good men, however, with equal reverence for the Scriptures, think the flood to have been less extensive, and that the sacred narrative does not necessarily imply a flood that should encompass more than a certain district of the earth. They believe that Moses described the country of Eden—wherein the garden was planted—as it existed in his day, and that the supposition of a partial deluge extending over that portion of the earth alone which was inhabited by the race whose spiritual history forms the theme of the Bible narrative, answers all the conditions of the Mosaic account, while it sets aside some perplexing difficulties. Now this matter can probably be fully settled only by a careful topographical survey, and for our own part we have long desired to see it accomplished by conscientious and competent inquirers.

Finally, the study of the topography of the Scriptures is not only important because it elucidates them and proves their authenticity, but also because it has exerted a powerful influence upon the character and opinions of the people whose customs and habits now become so valuable as exponents of those of the ancient Hebrews. It is often said that the general characteristics of a country have a great influence in forming the character of its inhabitants, and we certainly see the fact strikingly exemplified when we contrast, for instance, the ancient people of Egypt with those of Greece. Besides this, most of the inhabitants of Western Asia are Orientals, and belong to the great family of which the Hebrews were members. The very language spoken in Syria and Palestine is cognate to that in which the Old Testament was originally written, and the

Arabs hold a near blood relationship to the Jews. Moreover, we must not forget the influence of local traditions, and the effect produced upon a people by having before their eyes, from generation to generation, from childhood to old age, the gradually crumbling ruins of some celebrated city or monument whose every stone tells a story intelligible to the most ignorant and supine. It is impossible to overrate the influence which the traditional history of Sinai has exerted upon the Arab mind, preparing it for the monotheistic faith of Islam, and even upon the mind of Mohammed himself and his immediate followers;* and the veneration still entertained by all classes for Jerusalem, called by Muslims "el Koods esh Sherif"—*the holy, the glorious*—can be traced to nothing else but traditional history.

* Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 56.

CHAPTER II.

WATER, AND LIFE UPON THE WATER.

THE abundance or scarcity of water and its quality exert a greater influence upon the character of a people than is generally supposed. The fresh draughts enjoyed by the mountaineer on the very brink of perennial snows have an almost electrical effect upon him, while the muddy water used by the people of Mesopotamia and Egypt imparts to them sluggishness both of body and mind, and fits them to be the slaves of governors and kings.

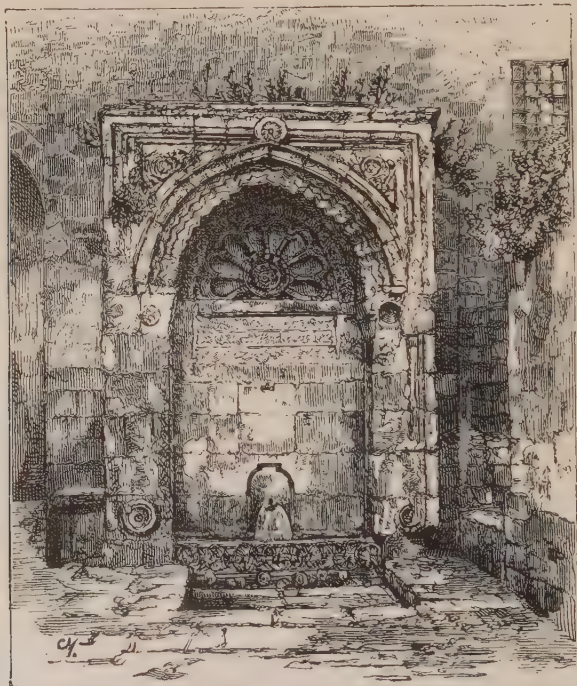
Almost the only perennial stream that flows through the land of Palestine is the Jordan, the "Descender," called by the Hebrews "the River," as is the Nile by the Egyptians. It starts from the cool slopes of Hermon, between Sidon and Damascus, widens on reaching Galilee into the Lake of Tiberias, and flows thence in rapid descent, dashing and twisting in every direction till it reaches the plain of Jericho and the Dead Sea. Nearly all the other streams of this land better deserve the name of winter torrents than of rivers. Springs here are not numerous, and often disappear in time of drought, owing to the lack of forests, the hardness of the rock, and the slight elevation of the hills.* This feature, however, is not peculiar to Palestine. Western Asia generally, though more favored with rain, is only comparatively a country of springs and rivers, with the exceptions of the high mountainous regions and a broad belt thickly wooded running all along the north side of the peninsula of Asia Minor, and extending from the shores of the Black Sea to a distance of twenty or thirty miles inland. Even Mesopotamia, which lies so near the lofty Koordish mountains, was in ancient times watered by artificial means.

This celebrated land became the rich and beautiful garden

* Hosea xiii., 15.

that it was by means of its many canals, which received their supply of water from the two great rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, distributing it all over the face of the country. These canals having at the present time fallen into decay, the country has of necessity again become a waste.

As might be expected, the existence of a valuable spring of water has often determined the site of a village or city. A



Public Fountain at Jerusalem. (Eccles. xii., 6.)

structure of mason-work, more or less costly or ornamental, has been erected to save the precious element from waste, and make it more accessible. The spot is often beautifully ornamented with shade-trees; a town grows up around it; and a woman from every family in the place comes, at least once in a day, with a jar on her shoulder, to obtain the needed supply for her household. This duty, however, is usually performed by the younger members of the family, the girls beginning early to accustom themselves to a task which has withal the attraction

of social gossip, while jar after jar is slowly filling from the trickling stream.*

The jars they use are of various forms, sometimes with handles and sometimes without; again with broad rounded bases, when they are carried upon a small circular cushion placed upon the head; or having almost pointed bases, which rest upon the cushioned shoulder, unless the bearer prefers to balance the vessel farther back, with its side pressing against the shoulder-blade. But it is a fact worthy of note that the forms of the modern water-jars are almost always a reproduction of the ancient article used in the same locality, but of coarser material and plainer style than the old. This is proved both by sculptures and by specimens occasionally brought to light among old ruins. The mode of carrying water is alluded to in the Scriptures.† The jar of water is brought home and set in the corner of the dwelling upon the earth, or on a stand specially prepared for it; by its side is placed an earthen cup or one of brazen ware or glass,



Woman carrying Water. (Gen. xxiv., 46.)

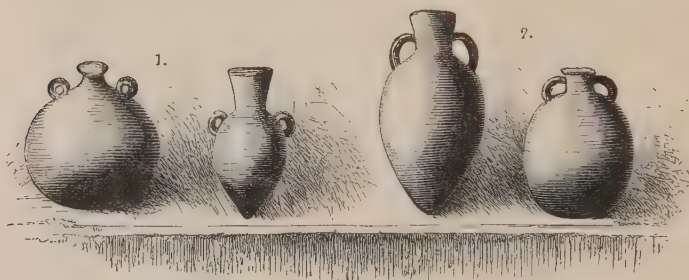
according to the taste or wealth of the owner, for the common use of the household. This cup is often turned over so as to cover the mouth of the vessel, in order to prevent any thing from falling into it. Water for drinking, however, is usually kept in a smaller earthen jar or cruse, which is open at the top or perforated with small holes to pour in the water.‡ In the latter case it has a spout, as well as a handle, through which the fingers are passed when using it, while the thumb clasps the neck. The end of the spout is first applied to the mouth, and then gradually withdrawn to the distance of a

* 1 Sam. ix., 11.

† Gen. xxiv., 15; Mark xiv., 13.

‡ 1 Sam. xxvi., 11; 1 Kings xix., 6.

foot or so, the water all the while continuing to flow in a jet into the open mouth; it is then brought skillfully to its first position at the close of the draught.* It is not an unusual sight, however, to see a girl or a woman who is bringing her pitcher from the well or fountain take it down from her head or shoulder, and give some one to drink of it, which is uniformly done by resting the side of the jar upon one hand, while it is balanced at a proper angle with the other: he who drinks touches the pitcher only with his lips.† Nor is it considered improper for a man, though a stranger, to ask a woman to let down her pitcher and give him to drink.‡ As most Orientals like an occasional draught of water during the night, a cruse is usually placed so near the bed spread upon the floor that the



Ancient (1.) and Modern (2.) Water-pitchers. (Matt. xiii., 14.)

sleeper can reach it by merely raising his head from his pillow and stretching out his hand. Mothers are particularly careful to be provided with the means of giving a refreshing draught of water to their little ones when they wake up in the night. This habit evidently prevailed among the Hebrews, for we find distinct references to it in the Scriptures.§

Whenever a larger provision of water is needed, earthen jars of considerable size—sometimes of a capacity to contain twenty-five gallons—are ranged in rows and buried in the earth, filled with water and covered over the mouth with a flat stone, the porous texture of the jar keeping the water cool by evaporation. When the Jews were in possession of Palestine their

* The Spaniards have borrowed this custom from the Arabs.

† Gen. xxiv., 18. ‡ John iv., 7. § 1 Sam. xxvi., 11, 12; 1 Kings xix., 6.

frequent washings and purifyings doubtless compelled them thus to collect considerable quantities for religious purposes, and they must often have used such stone jars, or "water-pots," as are mentioned in the account of the marriage feast, where our Lord performed his "beginning of miracles" by changing water into wine.* We shall also, by-and-by, have occasion to remark that wine was, and is still, kept in similar jars.† Such jars are used, not for water and wine alone, but also to serve, as bins and barrels do in other lands, to store various kinds of provisions for the household, such as wheat, barley, flour, loaves of bread, oil, olives, dried vegetables, and fruits. Thus stored they are uninjured by the heat, and are safe from the depredations of the rats and mice.

But the fountain was not the gathering-place for youthful maidens only. It was doubtless also what it now is, the place where the clothes-washing of the whole village was carried on, this operation being performed in the open air. The matrons set a large kettle or boiler against an old wall or some huge rock, with small stones to steady it underneath, and after washing, spread the clothes to dry upon the surrounding shrubs. Should the village be of any considerable size, the curling smoke is seen rising by the fountain almost every day of the week. Hence this spot is often wholly monopolized by the female portion of the community. Even the passing traveler stops at a respectful distance, and, handing his little brass traveling-cup to some romping child who has followed its mother thither, slakes his thirst, and passes on.‡ Sometimes, however, the more provident and more generous villagers prefer to shelter their worthy dames from rain and sunshine while performing duties so indispensable to the general comfort. They put up a rude building, where, screened from the gaze of outsiders, their children can also enjoy occasional ablutions. We know two considerable cities which possess hot-water springs on their outskirts, where all the washing of the

* John ii., 6. In Cana "we saw large, massy stone water-pots, not preserved nor exhibited as relics, but lying about. From their appearance, and the number of them, it was quite evident that a practice of keeping water in large stone pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty-seven gallons, was once common in the country."—CLARK'S "Travels," p. 271.

† Jer. xxxv., 5.

‡ Job xxii., 7.

town is done. The spot is crowded all day long with women and children, so that men can visit it only at about sunset, when the women's work is finished and they are returning to their homes.

Mineral springs are abundant in Western Asia, and most of them formerly had protecting structures built over them, some of whose remains are yet standing. The Pool of Bethesda* was probably supplied with water from an intermittent spring, which also possessed mineral qualities. This characteristic in springs of ebbing and flowing is not at all uncommon. Bethesda is now dry, but the Pool of Siloam,† which is of the same nature, and was probably supplied from the same source, has an intermittent ebb and flow recurring every few minutes.‡ Near Beirut is a fountain of this kind, gushing forth from the foot of Lebanon in so copious a flow that its waters are utilized as a mill-stream to supply flour for the city; yet it is periodically dry for hours at a time.

The insufficiency of water compelled men from the earliest times to supply their necessities by digging wells. Most of the springs being appropriated by towns and villages, and the best lands around them being under cultivation, the nomadic tribes, and all who occupied themselves with the raising of cattle, were driven to the wilderness, by which is meant, not the dry and grassless waste, but such portions of country as were not supplied with settled inhabitants. Here sheep were kept in the more grassy spots, while bushes and shrubs offered the best food for the flocks of goats and herds of larger cattle, including asses and camels.

These tracts of country were and are still poorly supplied with water. Wells were dug, therefore, which were considered a valuable possession, often being made objects of strife, and continuing in the hands of the stronger party.§ There are many such wells still existing, scattered over extensive tracts of the country, and they are sometimes, we have reason to believe, of great antiquity. Such, for instance, is the well near Shechem, called "Jacob's Well;"|| such are the three wells of Beer-sheba, one of which is represented in the accompanying

* John v., 2-4.

† John ix., 7.

§ Gen. xxi., 25; xxvi., 20, 21.

‡ Lynch, p. 421.

|| John iv., 12.

illustration, with its watering-troughs. The mouth of such a well is often covered with a large stone, requiring the strength of several men to drag it sufficiently aside to render the water accessible.* This having been effected, a jar or leathern bucket is let down by the shepherd or traveler by means of a rope, every one being obliged to supply himself with these conveniences.† In other cases there is a flight of stone steps by which



One of the Wells of Beer-sheba, with its Watering troughs. (Gen. xxvi., 32, 33.)

one descends to the mouth of the well.‡ Troughs of stone usually stand near the well, which are filled with water for the use of the flocks and herds.§ In some parts of Western Asia the wells are supplied with a long pole, balanced on the top of a perpendicular post; at one end of the pole is fastened a bucket with its chain, and at the other a weight is fixed to facilitate the raising of the bucket when filled.|| There are many wells to be found which are now dried up. They occur both

* Gen. xxix., 3, 7, 8.

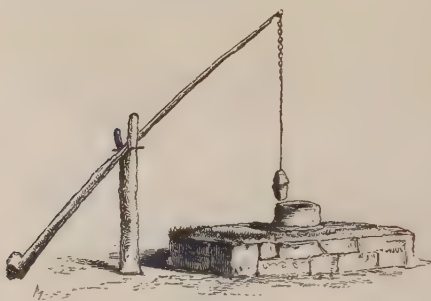
† John iv., 11.

‡ Gen. xxiv., 16.

§ Gen. xxiv., 20; Ex. ii., 16.

|| This contrivance is used in Egypt for raising the water of the Nile, and is there called *shadoof*.

on the roadside, upon the track of the nomad tribes in their spring and autumn migrations, and among the ruins of towns and villages. The large stone perforated in the centre often still covers the mouth of the well, and the deep grooves worn by the bucket-rope in its sides attest the many refreshing draughts drunk here by man and beast of former generations, before the well became choked up with sand or soil. Sometimes the stone has been removed, and there remains only a treacherous opening on a level with the ground. The filling up of wells is still, as anciently, regarded a legitimate act of hostility;* but this is often produced by natural causes. The pit into which Joseph was cast by his brethren was either a dried-up well, or one which had been dug without water being



Well at Thyatira, built of ancient Marbles. (Numb. xxiv., 7.)

found.† David's spies were hid in a well that was dry, its mouth being on a level with the ground: the woman of the house effectually concealed them by placing a covering over the well's mouth and spreading ground corn (the modern "boorghoor") thereon, as if to dry.‡ The pit into which an ass might be fallen, spoken of by our Lord,§ may have been a dried-up well of the ordinary kind, the larger well used for watering gardens, or a mortar pit covered with boards or branches.

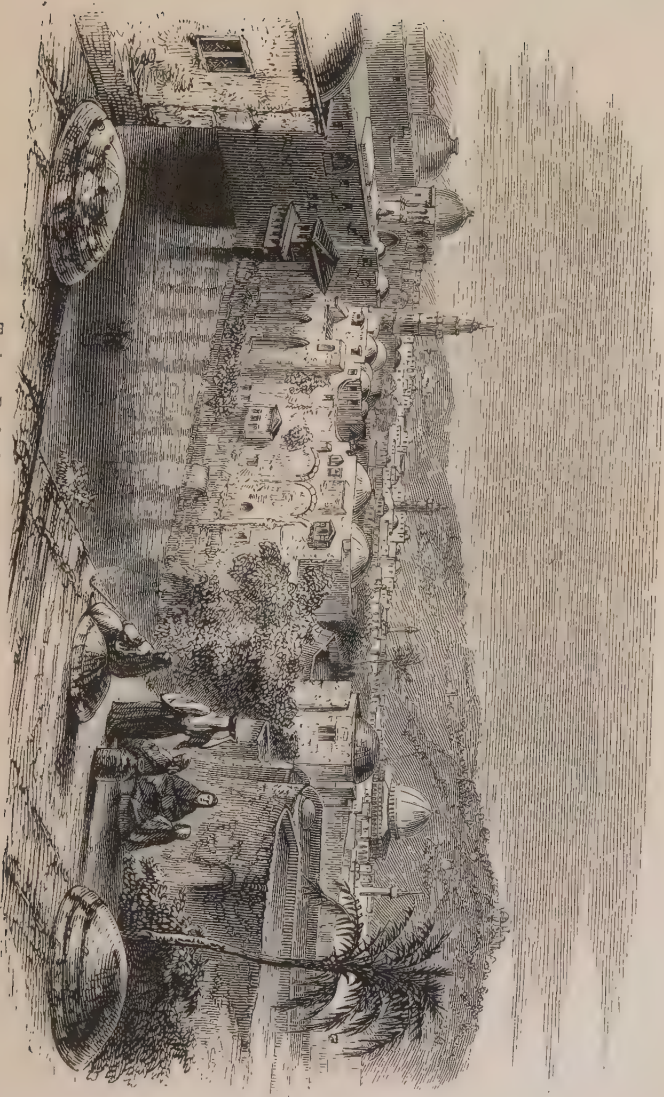
Cisterns also abound throughout the country. They are not confined to the cities and villages, where they are often built of solid masonry, but are often seen likewise in the most solitary part of the wilderness. These latter consist of a large tank more or less deep in the earth, built around with stonework, the walls rising several feet above ground and sometimes roofed. A door in one side of the structure leads down a flight of steps extending even to the bottom of the tank; so

* Gen. xxvi., 15; 2 Kings iii., 19, 25.

† 2 Sam. xvii., 18, 19.

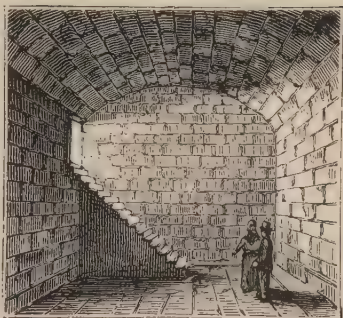
‡ Gen. xxxvii., 24.

§ Luke xiv., 5.



Tank or Pool of Bethesda, Jerusalem. (Gant. iv., 15.)

that by it the water is always accessible, however high or low it may be in the cistern.* We have also seen in Northern Syria, close to the ruins of Gebel Simon, a cistern more than a hundred feet in depth and as many in width, hewn out of the solid rock, and accessible only through an opening at the top, which was covered with a large stone. The cistern under a



Interior of a Cistern near Aleppo. (2 Chron. xxvi., 10.)

part of the Temple platform at Jerusalem, though not so deep, is much greater in extent, and is cut out of the solid rock, which is left in the form of rude pillars to support the roof.

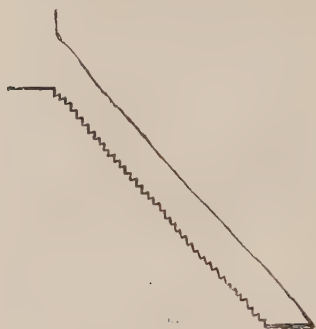


Cistern under the Temple area at Jerusalem. (Neh. ix., 25.)

One of the most ancient forms of a cistern, made for the supplying of water for the garrison of a citadel or fort upon a commanding height, consisted of a nearly circular shaft some fifteen feet in diameter and one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet in depth, cut into the solid rock at an angle of about forty-five degrees, the descent into which was by regular steps. This kind of cistern, however, we have seen only in the northern part

* "In the neighborhood" (of Birejik, in Mesopotamia) "were several cisterns or tanks, excavated in the rock side, with steps to enable the drawers of water to descend."—FLETCHER, p. 354.

of Asia Minor; and whether any one of this form is anywhere alluded to in the Scriptures is doubtful. The frequent men-



Perpendicular Plan of Rock Cistern at Tocat.

tion of cisterns, however, proves that in some form they were as commonly used as now.* One of the "Giant Cities" of the Lijah, which is in an excellent state of preservation, contains so many cisterns hewn out of the hard basalt that the modern Arabs have called the place "Brak," or the Cistern.† And we hardly need to speak of the two large ancient cisterns shown to travelers at Constantinople, and bearing the name

of "The Thousand and One Pillars," from the numerous stone pillars which bear the roof. One of them is still in use. It is also well known that a considerable portion of Alexandria, in Egypt, is built upon vast cisterns, yearly filled with the water of the Nile.‡

Orientalers are exceedingly fond of gazing upon water, whether running or still. The houses of the wealthy often possess a tank or basin only a few feet in diameter, set in the middle or just outside of their principal room or divan, which on the side toward the court is entirely open. A fountain at the rim is ever running, and there is often at the centre of the basin a jet whose incessant play, while it tends to cool the atmosphere, strikes the ear with a soothing music. Here are spread carpets and cushioned sofas, and here the host receives and entertains his guests. For this jet of water a supply is needed at some elevation above the basin; and where nature has not provided it, Orientalers, sometimes at great expense, construct ample reservoirs which afford a steady supply. The "Pools of Solomon," near Bethlehem, seem to have been built for this purpose, as well as to water the extensive gardens which doubtless adorned the country houses of that wealthy monarch.§ We find their counterpart in the reservoirs or "bends" built by the sultans

* 2 Kings xviii., 31.

† Thevenot, Part I., p. 124.

‡ Macgregor, p. 172.

§ Eccles. ii., 5, 6.



Saracenic Aqueduct over the Meles, near Smyrna. (2 Kings xx., 20.)

in the vicinity of Constantinople. These are situated in the forests of Belgrade. A narrow valley is closed up with a wall of solid masonry, and soon becomes a beautiful sheet of water, which affords a regular supply for the gardens of the grandees of the empire and their palaces. Similar to this was the pool made by Hezekiah,* and others, mentioned in the Scriptures as the "Pool of Gibeon," that of Hebron, of Samaria, etc.†

Water is usually conveyed from a reservoir or spring in the mountains, by means of pipes of baked clay, to the town for the supply of its public and private fountains and baths. As the distance over which it is thus conveyed is often great, narrow valleys are spanned by aqueducts of wood or solid masonry. Such was the "conduit" of Hezekiah,‡ and such is now the aqueduct of Belgrade, near Constantinople. A similar structure near Smyrna was built by the Saracens, for the aqueduct is not a Western but an Eastern invention. Orientals have even made an approach to the discovery of the hydraulic principle, by which water seeks its own level, a fact which the ancients seem not to have known. When the distance is not great, they lay pipes down the hill into a valley and up again on the upper side, and suppose that the water reaches the latter height by the impetus which it acquires in running down the hill. Hence, when the valley is broad, they erect columns or towers, that the water rising to their summits may acquire a new impetus, and thus get over the entire valley. Some of these towers, however, are built within the towns, and are used merely to distribute the water to the different houses or quarters.



Water Pillars.

Orientals are generally good connoisseurs of water. This being almost their only beverage (with the exception of an occasional tiny cup of coffee

* 2 Kings xx., 20.

† 2 Sam. ii., 13; also iv., 12; and 1 Kings xxii., 38.

‡ 2 Kings xx., 20.

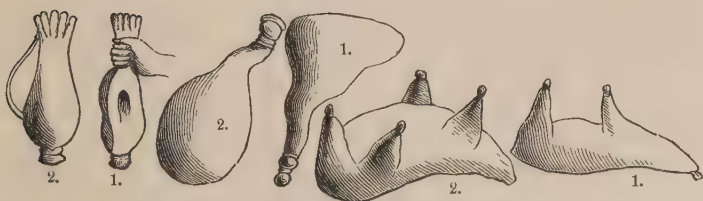
without sugar), they learn to distinguish, by the sense of taste, the smallest shade of difference in the quality of the water of different springs. There are in Constantinople shops in which nothing but water is sold, the price of a glass varying in accordance with the reputation of the spring whence it is brought. Nor would it be easy to deceive the customers. The water of a spring near Nicomedia is often conveyed to Constantinople, a distance of sixty miles by water, for the use of the pashas and grandees; and a steamer regularly plies between the capital and the island of Marmora, seventy-five miles off, in the sea of that name, in order to supply the sultan's seraglio with the water of a celebrated spring. This may perhaps somewhat serve to explain the longing of King David for a draught from the "well of Bethlehem," his own native city, of which he had been accustomed to drink when a child. But when the good man found it had been procured at the risk of the life of some of his bravest followers, he showed his noble heart by refusing to taste of it, and pouring it as an offering to the God of battles.* Our statement also serves to illustrate the estimate placed by the inhabitants of Jericho upon the favor they asked of the Prophet Elisha, and the value of the miracle he performed by "healing the spring of the waters" which supplied that city.†

Water has often to be conveyed over the desert, as the traveler would otherwise perish from thirst. It is carried in leathern sacks or "bottles," made of the entire skin of an ox, usually tanned. The openings at the feet and neck are sewed, one hole only being left for pouring in and drawing out the water. This opening is carefully tied up after filling, in order to prevent a leakage. But the heat of the sun is so intense, that these "bottles" have to be daubed over with oil or grease, otherwise the water evaporates in a few days. Earthen vessels are rarely transported in such journeys, on account of their liability to break. Smaller bottles are everywhere in use made of an entire goat-skin; but sheep-skins are never employed, not possessing sufficient strength.

In the accompanying illustration we have placed side by side different kinds of skin-bottles, all of which are faithful copies of well-known originals—the ancient from the Egyptian and

* 2 Sam. xxiii., 15, 16.

† 2 Kings ii., 19-22.



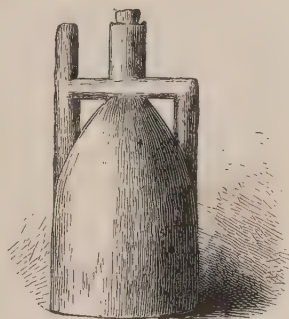
Ancient (1) and Modern (2) Skin-bottles. (Gen. xxi., 14; Josh. ix., 14; Matt. ix., 17.)

Assyrian remains, and the modern from the works of Lane and others—lest we should be charged with partiality were we to copy our own drawings. The identity of the forms is certainly very close and noteworthy. There is also a kind of jar, cut out of pine wood, found in some parts of the country, which answers the purpose of carrying water, and keeps it quite cool if hung on the shady side of the traveler's horse or camel.*

The Arabs have repeatedly been known, when driven to extremities by thirst, to kill one of their camels, and drink the water which is found in its stomach, nature having wonderfully enabled that animal to swallow at once, and carry within its own body, a provision of water sufficient to last it many days.

We now turn from the consideration of this precious element, to the life led upon the water by the sailor and the fisherman.

The oldest record found in the Scriptures of the construction of a craft to float upon water is that of Noah's ark. We have no information of a positive nature respecting this remarkable structure except what is contained in the sacred text;† but though the dimensions are therein minutely given, the shape or form is not otherwise described. The name תֵּבָה in the original Hebrew is the same as that rendered κίβωτος, a chest, in the Greek of both the Old and the New Testaments. Considering all the circumstances of the case, it is probable that Noah's ark was a large floating house, thirty feet in height by fifty in



Wooden Water-jug.

* Pococke, i., p. 131.

† Gen. vi., 14-16.

breadth, and about five hundred feet long, built of the wood of the wild cypress ("gopher"), which grows upon all the high mountains of Western Asia, and particularly of Armenia. This wood is of the same enduring nature as the cedar. But the name "gopher" has been applied to a variety of trees, some of which yield the "pitch" with which the ark was covered "within and without."*



Coin of Apamea. (Gen. viii., 10, 11, 18.)

The ark had a slanting roof, and was not intended for sailing purposes, but simply to float upon the water and preserve its precious freight. Tradition agrees with this description. The city of Apamea, in Asia Minor, was built at the foot of a high mountain, upon which its inhabitants claimed that Noah's ark rested after the Deluge; hence they called their city "Apamea of the ark," to distinguish it from other cities of the same name; it also probably indicates the early existence there of an arkaic worship. Silver coins are still extant of this city, struck by Alexander Severus, Macrinus, or Philip, representing "two persons in an ark which rests upon a rock surrounded by water: a bird is seen flying with a branch in its claws, and another rests on the ark.

A man and a woman stand in front, with their right hands raised. On the ark is the Greek word ΝΩΕ (Noah), and we must therefore designate the gentleman and lady within the ark by the name of the Patriarch and his "better half."†

The Hellenic tradition of the Deluge, also, represents Deucalion and his wife as having been saved from the flood by floating in a box or chest, until the waters had retired.



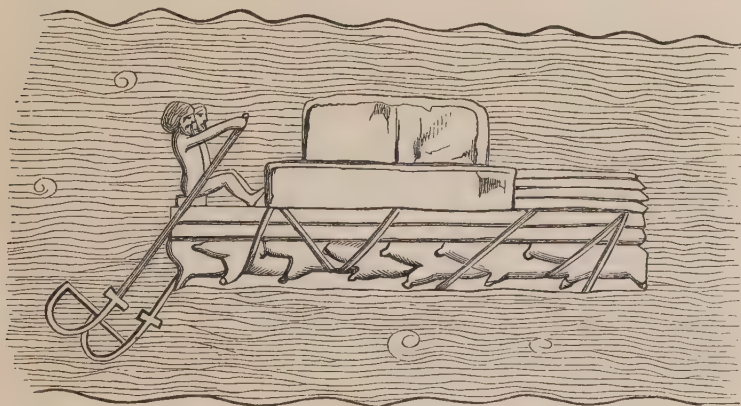
Assyrian Warrior swimming on an inflated Skin.

The Hellenic tradition of the Deluge, also, represents Deucalion and his wife as having been saved from the flood by floating in a box or chest, until the waters had retired.

* Gen. vi., 14.

† Arundell, i., p. 210.

One of the earliest forms of a boat used by mankind consisted of the inflated skins of animals. It is a remarkable fact, however, that probably the only place in the world in which this primitive mode of transportation is still in use is the course of the Tigris and the Euphrates, in Mesopotamia; while the only ancient pictures of this manner of floating are found among the



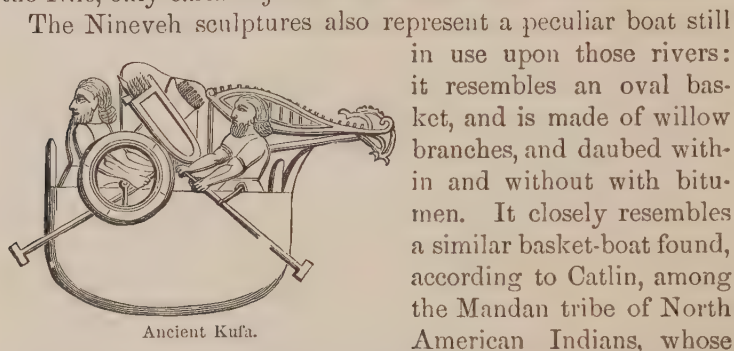
Inflated Skin Raft: from Assyrian Sculpture. (Isa. xliii., 14.)

sculptures of Nineveh on the former of these rivers. The accompanying sketches are copied thence, and illustrate the manner of crossing the river by a single warrior, after inflating the skin, precisely as is done now in the same localities; also the raft supported by a number of inflated skins, and conveying stone for building the palace of Sennacherib; the only point in which it differs from the modern *Kelek* is in the shape of the



Modern Kelek, with Tent.

oars. We have drawn the raft now used to show this striking resemblance. It is employed in the conveyance of produce to Bagdad, where the wood is profitably sold, and the bags are sent home on the backs of donkeys. A similar raft or float exists upon the Nile, only earthen jars are used instead of inflated skins.*



Ancient Kufa.

in use upon those rivers: it resembles an oval basket, and is made of willow branches, and daubed with in and without with bitumen. It closely resembles a similar basket-boat found, according to Catlin, among the Mandan tribe of North American Indians, whose

principal festival appears to be a commemoration of the Deluge. Besides these, there were boats of the ordinary form plying upon these rivers, which still exist, but are now confined to the portion of the Tigris lying below Bagdad, on account of the shallowness of the water. In Egypt also we have, upon the ancient monuments, the fac-simile of the boats which to-day



Modern Kufa.

ply up and down the Nile, with their lateen-sails about two hundred feet in length, and following the same rules of navigation as in the time of Herodotus.†

Both Egyptian and Assyrian remains contain pictures of

* Pococke, i., 84, pl. 8.

† Bruce, i., 44, etc.



Oriental Ships. (Psa. civ., 26.)

ancient ships which floated upon the Mediterranean, and have thus afforded us the opportunity to compare them with those of the modern Levant.

No one who has sailed on the waters of Western Asia can have failed to notice the difference between their ships and sailing craft, and those of Europe and America. This difference consists chiefly in the lofty stern of Eastern vessels, while in those of the West the entire line of the bulwarks is nearly parallel to the surface of the sea. The time is not far distant, however, when the old form still prevailed in Europe. The pictures we possess of the famous Dutch fleets, the Spanish Armada, and the ships which landed Queen Anne and the Prince of Orange on the shores of England, show that the mariners of that day, and even of a later period, affected still loftier sterns than many of the ancients.

But though numerous steamboats and sailing vessels built on the modern pattern are seen in all parts of the Mediterranean, yet the Oriental adheres, in the main, to the ancient form, which he deems better adapted to his habits and the waters in which he sails.

The peculiarity of form to which we have alluded characterizes the craft of every size on the Black Sea, through the *Ægean* Sea, and the eastern end of the Mediterranean. A narrow bow usually rises to a considerable height, while the sides are low and spreading out above, so as to keep the deck dry. The stern is sharp like the bow, but rises high, while the cumbersome rudder reaches still higher, and has a very long cross-pole, one end of which is held by the steersman. This important personage—always the captain or his mate—sits cross-legged upon a little quarter-deck, from which high position he can best watch the course of the ship, which he steers not by the compass, but solely with the eye. At the extreme end of the stern is often seen a small low bench, upon which the steersman sometimes sits for a change. Here the captain often rests his head when, as is his custom, he sleeps upon the quarter-deck. This little bench may generally be seen in the fishing crafts, particularly those which ply on the Sea of Galilee,* a circumstance which explains the nature of the “pillow” upon which rested the head of our Lord during the sudden storm narrated in Mark iv., 38. Passengers of distinction alone are allowed a place upon the quarter-deck.

The little skiffs which glide upon the surface of the currents in the Bosphorus at Constantinople, with an ease and swiftness unequaled by any other craft, and have the name of *Kùrlangùch*, or “the swallows,” do not deviate from the general form we have described; but their extreme length of bow and stern makes up for their diminished height. They have two little decks, and the passengers sit on the bottom of the boat in order to steady the frail little bark.

In one respect, however, modern sailing craft differ from those of Bible times: we refer to the mode of steering. It can not be doubted that the original model of the ship was taken from the duck and other aquatic birds. The paddles or oars were rude imitations of their feet; and as they also use them for the purpose of altering their course, two broad paddles were placed on the two sides of the ship near the stern, and employed as rudders. It is doubtless to this sort of steering gear that Luke refers in the narrative of Paul’s shipwreck.†

* MacGregor, “Rob Roy on the Jordan,” p. 358.

† Acts xxvii., 40.

A more thorough study of nature, however, led to the adoption of the single rudder now in universal use, in imitation of fishes, which alter their course by the motion of their tails; but the steering paddle is still often used in addition to the rudder.

An observer can not fail to notice that an eye is carved or painted on each side of the bows of many modern Oriental ships.* This was also the case in ancient times. Imagination gave life and sense to the craft: it peered into the storm with its eyes, and pressed forward to its goal. This is referred to in the narrative of Paul's last voyage: "And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive."† "Could not bear up into the wind" would, by a literal translation, be rendered, "Could not keep her eyes to the wind." The correctness of our interpretation is proved by several pictures of ancient ships which have been found painted upon the wall of a house unburied at Pompeii; these may be seen in Calmet's large Dictionary, vol. iii., fragment 214. The same process of imagination is found indicated in almost every language. In English we do not speak of a ship in the neuter gender, but in the feminine: "She has reached *her* destination;" "She is going ten knots."

Orientals now, like the ancients, use oars or sweeps in every kind of vessel, however large. They are rendered necessary by the frequent dead calms which occur along the rock-bound coast, in the numerous bays, and among the lofty islands. That portion of the oar which is within the vessel is made thick and heavy, and is even loaded with lead, that it may balance the much longer portion which extends beyond the ship's side. Each oar or sweep is worked by two or even three men together. Not many years ago, common ships had as many oars as in ancient times; in the *Sumbikeh*, for instance, which was of the size of a common galiot or small galley (or ship of war), only a little longer, there were at least twelve oars on each side, and forty-eight oarsmen in all; it had but one mast,

* This custom also prevails in China. "On either side of the bow there is never wanting a huge eye. We asked a Chinese seaman the significance of that ornament. He promptly replied: 'Junk no have eyes, no can see.' It is a remarkable coincidence that not only the boats but the houses of the Alaska Indians are furnished with eyes."—SEWARD'S "Travels Round the World," p. 105.

† Acts xxvii., 15.

and a very large sail.* The number of these sweeps does not now usually exceed two on each side of the ship, and is often but one. But during the Greek revolution, fifty years ago, the piratical vessels significantly called "Mysticks" often carried twenty pairs of oars.

Modern Orientals have discovered the inconvenience of having only one mast in large ships, but the smaller craft never carry more. It is short, and inclines forward. Near its base rests a long yard, which reaches to the end of a broad lateen-sail. To an Occidental eye this looks very clumsy, especially the bagging of the upper portion of the sail, and the thick ribs of extra cloth lining it there. But it is the form best adapted to the sudden gusts and squalls they meet upon the waters they navigate. We have seen boats with a neater sail upset in an instant, while these, slightly leaning over for a moment, seemed to stand up more firmly as the breeze grew stiffer; the wind striking the upper part of the lateen-sail from below lifts up and steadies the vessel. In Egypt some of the gala boats on the Nile "spread a sail of many colors, as was done anciently in the same land."†

We have described thus minutely the ships and boats of modern Western Asia, because we believe they present a most correct picture, on the whole, of those which existed when the Scriptures were written. The Jews were not much addicted to a sea-faring life,‡ yet even in David's time they held possession of sea-ports upon the Mediterranean and Red Sea. These could not be of any considerable size, and the ships of the ancients rarely exceeded one thousand two hundred tons burden. Often no regular harbor existed, and, on the occurrence of a storm, most of the shipping was drawn up, as it is now, upon the beach of a tideless sea. This process is described so far back as the siege of Troy, by Homer's immortal verse. In Solomon's day, the servants of King Hiram cut the cedars of

* Thevenot, Part I., chap. lxii., p. 224.

† Thevenot, Part I., chap. lxvi., p. 233. Wilkinson, ii., p. 167.

‡ The graphic pictures of the horrors of sea-sickness contained in Psa. cvii., 25-27, and Prov. xxiii., 34, show that the Hebrews were as little fond of the sea as are their posterity; and this applies to all Orientals in an eminent degree, professional seamen alone excepted; at the same time, sea-captains all agree that no people suffer the infliction with greater resignation.

Lebanon, and, making them into rafts, floated them to Joppa, the port appointed by the Jewish king.* In the same manner, the timber which grows abundantly on the northern coast of Asia Minor is cut down by the sultan's servants, made into rafts at Sinope and other ports on the Black Sea, and conveyed to the capital, for the supply of the imperial navy yard, and for house-building.

In Bible times, the Sea of Tiberias was covered with many a vessel and boat employed either in fishing or in a carrying-trade between the large and flourishing cities which stood on both sides of that beautiful sheet of water. A constant communication was kept up between those of the tribes which dwelt on the western shore and their brethren on the eastern, on whom devolved the defense of the land against such enemies as came upon them from the desert. History mentions at one time as many as three hundred ships of various sizes which sailed upon the lake. But the five cities upon its shores were long ago destroyed by the repeated invasions of foreign foes. The people were either killed or scattered; and frequent inroads of the wandering Arabs have maintained the insecurity of life and property in that vicinity. For the last one hundred and fifty years there has been but one boat reported by travelers upon the lake; but there were six in 1870.† The Turkish tax-gatherers effectually prevent the revival of the fisheries by imposing the exorbitant tax of five hundred dollars per annum on every fishing-boat.

The "ferry-boat" employed to reconduct King David home‡ must have resembled the craft then in use upon the Sea of Galilee, or the ferries now plying upon the Orontes near Antioch, which are drawn across by means of a rope stretched from shore to shore; this is also done on the Upper Euphrates, and on many rivers of Asia Minor. As for the Dead Sea, it has, ever since the catastrophe which overtook the "cities of the plain," possessed a most insalubrious climate, and its navigation has, in modern times, been accomplished only by an American,§ but not without loss of life.

The modern seamen of Western Asia use no compass. They

* 1 Kings v., 8, 9.

† 2 Sam. xix., 18.

‡ MacGregor, "Rob Roy on the Jordan," pp. 352-7.

§ Lieutenant Lynch, U. S. N.

sail almost wholly in sight of land. They are skillful in discerning the signs of the weather, and avoid a storm by running into some place of safety. They generally spend the winter in a secure harbor, with the exception of short trips when the weather is settled and fair. In all these respects they resemble the ancients as they are particularly described in the disastrous voyage of St. Paul on his way toward Rome.* Our remarks, however, do not apply to the Greeks of Europe and the Archipelago, who, since the independence of their country, have adopted many European improvements. Before that revolution they differed in no respect from their neighbors on the Asiatic continent. The famous five ships of Canaris and his companions, which destroyed so many Turkish men-of-war, were nothing more than *saccolévas*, such as are now seen sailing up and down the channel of Scio. The noted pirate-ships that preyed upon the merchant navy of Europe for a dozen years, from 1821, were vessels of the same kind, propelled by forty oars, which suddenly attacked the becalmed merchantmen, and, when pursued by a ship of war, slipped into some rock-bound cove, sunk their vessel under its waters, and escaped to the surrounding cliffs, to put to sea again as soon as the enemy was out of sight. These robbers of the sea somewhat resembled in their habits and the fashion of their craft the celebrated pirates who infested the southern shores of Asia Minor just before the Christian era, and who were destroyed by Pompey. But the most perfect counterpart of the latter in modern times is found in the famous Algerine corsairs, so long the terror of the sea, who levied black-mail on the commerce of Europe.

We must in this place make a brief reference to some of the statements contained in the Book of Jonah, a composition which contains very remarkable internal evidences of its authenticity, but which has, nevertheless, been made the subject of much controversy. The Tarshish therein mentioned† is probably the Tarsus of the New Testament‡ and the Tarsoos of modern times, situated near the coast of Cilicia. It points out the fact, which is confirmed by other testimony, that there was much trade going on along the shore, and between the different ports

* Acts xxvii., 12, 13.

† Jonah i., 3.

‡ Acts ix., 11, 30; xi., 25.

of the Mediterranean. Two opposite courses have been followed by those who have discussed the miracle concerning Jonah and the fish. Some have sought to represent the entire narrative as a myth or allegory; while others have converted as many incidents as possible into miraculous interpositions of the Deity. Some of the latter class, for instance, have insisted that the fish must have been a whale, because the English translators have so rendered the word *ketos*; and in order to meet the difficulties which they thereby create, they suppose that the Mediterranean Sea may just at that period have swarmed with whales, which it never did before or since; or they triumphantly ask whether God can not commission a whale to go from the North Pole and meet Jonah at an appointed instant, swallow him, hold him three days in its mouth, and, throwing him up on the coast of Syria, return to the frozen sea? There is no doubt that God could have done it, and much harder things besides—he could even create a whale on the spot. But the question is not whether he could do these things, but whether he *has* done them. And we must never forget that it is as wrong to *add* to the words of the Book as to take away from them.* There is a harmony and a beautiful adaptation of cause and effect in all the works of God: and we have no reason to think that he sets aside this law in what we call his miraculous interpositions, though they are of too rare occurrence to allow us always to trace the connection. Some men would have thought it more befitting if the Son of God had changed the stones into bread to feed the multitude in the desert; but he preferred to feed them all with “five loaves and two small fishes.” Now it should be noticed that the word *ketos* used in Matt. xii., 40, is not restricted in its meaning to a whale or cetacean; “it may denote any sea-monster, either a whale or a shark, a seal, or a tunny of enormous size.”† Now we find that the white shark exists in the waters of the Mediterranean as well as in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and often attains the length of thirty feet. Though it generally first bites its prey, it frequently swallows it entire. Cases are on record, sustained by the most undoubted authority, in which entire bodies were found in the stomach of this fish, such as a man, a man clad with armor,

* Rev. xxii., 18.

† Smith's “Dict. of the Bible,” art. *Whale*.

and even a horse! Moreover, naturalists have recorded that sharks have the habit of throwing up again whole and alive the prey they have swallowed.*

With these facts before us, we are forced to the conclusion that the agent employed in the punishment of the prophet Jonah was a white shark, or similar fish. We do not thereby deny the miraculous interposition of the Almighty, for we recognize that his being preserved "in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" was not an event which accorded with the usual order of nature, any more than the preservation of the young Hebrews in the midst of Nebuchadnezzar's "burning fiery furnace."



Shell-fish eaten in the Levant. (Deut. xxxiii., 19.)

Fish have ever formed, as now, an important article of food with the people of Bible lands. The law of Moses distinguished between the species having scales and those which have not; and many still observe this distinction, and do not eat the latter. But many do not make any distinction between them, both Moslems and Christians, and hold in high estimation the eel and other scaleless fish. They also consume a great variety of shell-fish; and it is evident that this was also practiced by

* Couch, "History of Fishes," i., 33.

the ancients, for among the ruins of ancient cities which stood upon the sea-shore are found many shells of different kinds, which were doubtless thrown away after the living animal had been eaten. The principal of these were, and are still, the oyster, the clam, the pecten, the solen, the pinna, the echinus, and the sepia. Some of these indeed, particularly the oyster, have ceased to exist where they were once abundant. The spawn of some fish, particularly the mullet, are much relished.* Shrimps, crabs, and lobsters are also caught—the first with a scoop-net, the others with the hand, by wading in the water, and the lobsters with a baited osier-trap. These and the star-fish are all represented in the carved pictures of the sea-coast of the Mediterranean found among the remains of ancient Nineveh. Moses says of the tribe of Zebulun, on the Mediterranean shore, “They shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand”†—language aptly expressive of the habits of most shell-fish which dwell in the sand of the sea-shore, as well as graphically descriptive of the manner of eating them.

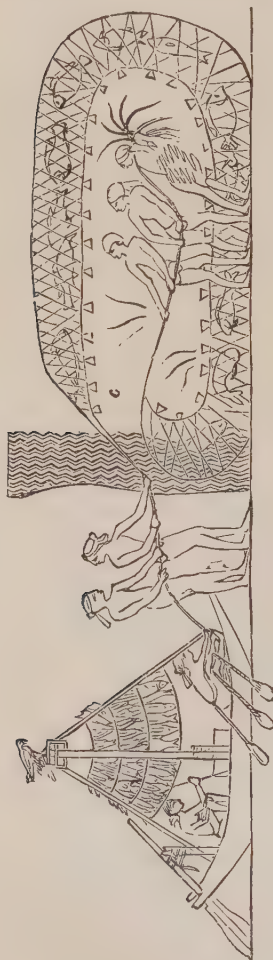
Jerusalem was supplied with fish, as now, mainly from Joppa, a distance of forty miles; fish also used to be brought from the Sea of Galilee, which is twice that distance. The narrative of the New Testament shows that that sheet of water was well stocked with fish, as it still is, and that a considerable portion of the people dwelling on its shores were fishermen. The modes of catching fish were the same as are still in use in all parts of Western Asia. They are taken with the hook,‡ or with a scoop-net fastened around a hoop and suspended from the end of a pole. This is chiefly used in catching the small sardines which abound in the waters of the Levant, particularly in the harbors, and which are eaten either fresh, salted, or preserved in oil. But fishing on a larger scale is done by means of a long net, some three or four feet in width, with pieces of lead attached along one side to sink it, and of cork on the other to keep it afloat. The operation is performed by men occupying two boats. To one of these is made fast one end of the net, while the remainder is piled up in the other boat. The latter is rowed rapidly off in a curved line, while one of the crew

* Pococke, i., 18.

† Deut. xxxiii., 19.

‡ Amos iv., 2; Matt. xvii., 27.

gradually drops the net into the water. The net is now spread, resting in a perpendicular position in the water. The two boats then, holding each one end of it, row quickly to the shore.



Ancient Egyptian Drag-net. (Matt. xiii., 47.)

The fishermen jump into the shallow water, and, holding the net-ropes, drag it to the shore, where they sit down, and slowly and carefully collect all the fish, shell-fish, and refuse which their net has scooped up, "gathering the good" into baskets, and "casting the bad away"—a scene we have witnessed many a time;* but which no picture of ours could portray more graphically than the accompanying copy of an Egyptian sculpture.

Much of the fishing can only be carried on in the night, when the moon does not shine.† After the net is spread out in the water, pieces of pitch-pine are lighted and placed in a roughly-made wire basket attached to the extremity of a pole. This pole is made fast to the bows of the boat, which is then rowed round in a curved direction, beginning at some distance from the net, and gradually approaching the open space between the two ends of it. The fish are attracted by the light; but a man standing upright upon the bows holds a long pole in his hand, terminated at the farther end by a wooden ball of considerable size, and ever and anon strikes the water on either side of the

boat, so as to produce a loud report and drive the fish toward the net; instead of this, large stones are sometimes flung into the water. In a dark night, the appearance of the flames gliding upon the sea, and of the man standing up in their light and

* Hab. i., 15; Matt. xiii., 47, 48.

† John xxi., 3.

brandishing a spear-like pole, produces a truly singular and unique effect. The difference between this mode of fishing and that of the drag-net is, that the latter is larger and heavier, and is only used near the shore, while the former may be employed anywhere, and is drawn directly into the boat. This net is not unfrequently used in the day-time, as well as the striking-pole or the stones.*

A common sight upon the sea-shores of the Levant consists of the fishermen's nets, scores of yards of it spread out to dry. The rocks and old stone-walls are preferred, being heated by the sun, and absorbing more rapidly the moisture of the net.† So likewise may the "fishers" often be seen, "sitting" upon the shore or in their boats, "mending their nets," whose meshes are not unfrequently broken by the struggling fish.‡

The people of the East are fond of bathing, and many of them are expert swimmers. There are in some of the islands valuable sponge fisheries, which are wholly worked by native divers. During the inundation of the Nile in July and August, when the valley is changed into a lake, with the towns standing out of the water like so many islands—it is quite common to see troops of people, especially children, both boys and girls, swimming from one village to another. It is worthy of notice that they all swim "hand over hand," alternately raising each arm out of the water, and thus never presenting the whole breast but only one side to the stream. Western swimmers, on the contrary, bring their hands together at each stroke, and then separate them, which is a much slower mode of locomotion. The American Indians, who are generally expert swimmers, uniformly practice the Oriental mode.§ It is interesting to find that in ancient times also Orientals practiced the same mode of swimming as their descendants; for, among the many Assyrian sculptures which represent persons in the act of swimming, we have not discovered one that gives a different testi-

* See Luke v., 6, 7; John xxi., 6–11. In the passages referred to, the net would have been drawn up into the boat had not the weight of the fishes prevented. The "fisher's coat" mentioned in the latter passage was probably the same as is now worn by fishermen; it is a short *aba*, or jacket of felt, reaching not quite to the knees, and usually provided with a hood. It is "girded about the loins" with a leathern strap.

† Ezek. xxvi., 5.

‡ Matt. iv., 21.

§ Catlin i., 162.

mony. The accompanying illustration will serve as a specimen. This curious fact will be found to explain and illustrate several passages of Scripture, such as Isa. xxv., 11: "He shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall



Assyrian Swimmer: from an ancient Sculpture. (Isa. xxv., 11.)

bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands." The ultimate lifting up of each arm and bringing it down with force, well expresses the repeated blows by which Moab was to "be trodden down as straw for the dunghill."*

* Isa. xxv., 10.

CHAPTER III.

PRODUCTIONS OF THE SOIL.—CEREALS.

WE have no general description in the Bible of the products of the soil in Palestine, but its frequent incidental allusions enable us to ascertain the fact that they have not varied in modern times. Moses, describing the Land of Canaan to Israel in the desert, speaks as follows: "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it."* This description is intended to set forth the superiority of the Land of Canaan over Egypt. The rains of heaven never descend upon most of the latter, and it was and is still a narrow valley of alluvial soil, closed in on the east and west by perfectly barren mountains and sandy plains, and watered by the Nile, which has formed a delta in the vicinity of the sea. No springs are to be found in it. The only water drunk is taken from the river,† which overflows its banks at a stated season of the year, and waters the gardens and fields that produce the sustenance of the people. The products of the soil are somewhat more tropical than those of Palestine. The vine and the olive, the fig and the pomegranate are indeed common, but enjoyed, as formerly, only by the wealthy. The principal productions of the soil are wheat—or "corn," as the Scriptures call it‡—barley, rice and cotton (the two last having been introduced in more recent times); and Moses assures his people that they shall not lack the articles of food to which they had been accustomed during their sojourn of two hundred years in the land of bondage.

* Deut. viii., 7–9.

† Exod. vii., 24.

‡ Gen. xli., 57; Exod. ix., 31, 32.

The honey of Palestine, known to be of an excellent quality,* and the numerous flocks upon the hill-sides, entitled it, and, though to a very inferior degree, still entitle it, to the name of "a land flowing with milk and honey."† The Jews were eminently an agricultural people. Commerce was discouraged among them, for the purpose of isolating them and preventing their adopting the idolatrous practices of their neighbors. It is worthy of note that the sea-coast, of which they finally took possession after a long struggle with the remnant of the Philistines, does not possess a single natural harbor, and to this day remains almost wholly closed to navigation and commerce. The nearest ports are Tyre and Sidon, and Providence never allowed the Jews to obtain possession of these. It was only at a late period in the Jewish history, *i. e.*, when the Messiah was about to appear, that many of these people settled in the principal cities, first of the Persian and then of the Macedonian and Roman empires, and doubtless prepared the heathen for the reception of Christianity, by their profession of a monotheistic religion.

The division of the land into fields for the purpose of cultivation is made, at the present day, in the same manner as in the remotest times. Neither wall, hedge, nor fence surrounds such fields; their limits are marked either by some natural boundary, such as a river, the bed of a torrent, the edge of a valley or hill, the highway, or, what is more generally the case, by means of large stones mostly buried in the soil. The repeated injunction contained in the Old Testament, not to "remove the old landmarks," apply equally to the present time.‡

The standard measure of land throughout the Turkish Empire is called a *deunum*, and is the area which one pair of oxen can plow in a single day; it is equal to a quarter of an acre, or a square of forty *arshuns* (nearly one hundred feet). There seems to be but one allusion to this fact in the Scriptures; it

* 1 Sam. xiv., 25-27; Matt. iii., 4.

† Deut. xxxi. 20. This expression, however, may have originated in a similar custom to what now prevails in the more fertile portions of Abyssinia, where the indispensable, and often the *only* article of food eaten at a meal, consists of butter and honey mixed together in a plate, into which the bread is dipped (Bruce iv., 232). We have repeatedly eaten this dish in various parts of Western Asia.

‡ Deut. xix., 14; Job xxiv., 2; Prov. xxii., 28; xxiii., 10.

is found in 1 Sam. xiv., 14, where the exploit of Jonathan and his armor-bearer is described; twenty of the enemy are stated to have fallen within the space of "a half acre of land" of "a yoke of oxen"—an expression better rendered by the words, "within the space of half a *deunum* of land." This measure is referred to in ancient profane writers, so that no change has occurred in this respect.

In speaking of the products of the soil, we are obliged to notice at the same time the condition of agriculture among the Hebrews. All they knew upon this subject had been derived from the Egyptians, among whom they had so long dwelt. From them they acquired the use of the plow and of the various tools and implements which we see figured on Egyptian monuments; yet they doubtless found them employed by the Canaanites, and thus ready to their hands at the time of the conquest. A close examination of these instruments enables us to ascertain the fact that no change whatever has occurred in the art of agriculture up to the present time in Western Asia. The ox is still inferior in size, and is not unfrequently seen yoked with the ass.* There are districts, however, where this valuable animal will compare well with those of more Northern climes; just as would seem to have been the case in the time of the Psalmist, who particularly notices "the Bulls of Bashan."† The buffalo now abounds in Asia Minor, and is found in Syria and Palestine; but he has been introduced since the beginning of the Christian era. His great strength renders him very useful to the farmer, both in plowing and drawing heavy carts.

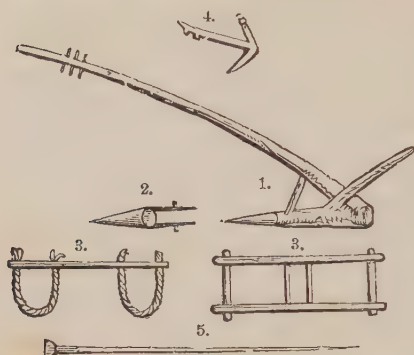
The plows of Palestine are small and light, consisting of a long piece of wood, having one extremity fastened to the yoke, and the other attached to a shorter piece obliquely tranverse; one end of the latter is set in the share, the other is held by the right hand of the plowman, who with his left grasps the goad—a long stick armed with a pointed piece of iron sharpened with a file.‡ The farmer usually makes his own plows, the shares being purchasable in the towns, and resembling in form, though not in size, the point of an arrow or spear, with a socket to receive the wooden part of the plow, to which

* Deut. xxii., 10.

† Psa. xxii., 12.

‡ 1 Sam. xiii., 21; Luke ix., 62.

it is made fast with a peg or nail. The yoke is very thin and light, and about twice the length of ours; so that the



1. Modern Plow (Luke ix., 62); 2. Share (Isa. ii., 4); 3. Yoke (Neh. xix., 2); 4. Mattock, and 5. Goad (Judg. iii., 31).

oxen stand farther apart, and the plow can the more easily be made to turn and avoid an obstruction which might break it. The whole thing, however, is so light that one often sees a farmer going to his work in the morning, or returning home at night, bearing his plow upon his shoulder; or he rides a diminutive donkey, with a

couple of plows fastened to the saddle behind him. The horse is never used for plowing. The illustrations give a good idea of an Arab farmer at work, and of plows and other tools used in different parts of the country.*



Arab Farmer plowing. (Isa. xxviii., 24.)

With such instruments (and their small cattle can not draw heavier), the earth can not be furrowed to a great depth. The sod is not turned over either to the right hand or to the left, but merely scratched a few inches below the surface. It argues well for the productiveness of the soil that such a mode of cultivation has continued to yield crops adequate to the

* A thousand years ago there was essentially the same difference as now between the European and the Asiatic plow.—See LACROIX'S "Middle Ages."

entire support of a large population for a long succession of centuries.

The corn of Egypt is as famous now as in ancient times. Nor is that of Palestine inferior in quality. This remark, indeed, applies to the whole of Western Asia. We ourselves have seen a single grain produce thirteen ears, each of which contained from twenty to twenty five-grains,* and we have been assured by a friend in whose word we place the most explicit confidence, that "he has seen between Bouldoor and Isparta, in Asia Minor, a single root of wheat which bore more than *one hundred* stems, each terminating in an ear."

The time of plowing commences as soon as "the early rain" of the end of September or beginning of October has softened the ground, and is continued through the winter, when the soil is not too heavy with moisture, even up to the beginning of March, at which time the more delicate seeds are put into the earth. Whenever there are facilities for irrigation, however, the plowing goes on through the year, and several crops are obtained of beans and other vegetables. It is a very common sight to see several yoke of oxen, each drawing a plow, following one another in the same field, thus supplying by repeated plowing the insufficiency of each operation. A wealthy farmer will so employ his oxen to go over each of his fields,† while those who possess but one pair aid each other in turn.

After the plow has passed twice over the soil—the second time at right angles to the first—and the sods have been broken up and smoothed with a wooden harrow,‡ the farmer walks over the ground, scattering the seed around him,§ which he takes from a bag or bushel-measure. It is then covered with a harrow; but sometimes a flock of sheep or goats is driven over the ground for the purpose of treading down the seed into the soil. This was also done anciently in Egypt.|| Wheat and barley are sowed in the autumn, and the later crops in February.

The crop of barley is harvested in Palestine about the first of April, but that of wheat in May. The season of gathering in the crops in Western Asia differs according to the latitude,

* Gen. xli., 22.

§ Luke viii., 5-8.

† 1 Kings xix., 19.

|| Wilkinson, "Ancient Egyptians," ii., 12, fig. 358.

‡ Isa. xxviii., 25.

but still more according to the elevation above the sea of any locality. There are cultivated fields, high up on lofty mountains, at a considerable distance from any habitation. The owners erect a booth, or a mud-but, and take up their quarters there as soon as the grain begins to ripen, in order to preserve it from the depredations of wild boars and other animals. These upland crops often do not ripen until late in July.

The full meaning of the promise contained in Lev. xxvi., 5, *i. e.*, that "the threshing should reach unto the vintage, and the vintage unto the sowing time," will be apprehended by remembering that in Palestine generally the wheat harvest ordinarily begins the end of May, and the vintage the end of August, while plowing and sowing can rarely be done before November.

The standing grain is cut with a sickle, being gathered by the left arm for the purpose, bound in sheaves with a band of its own straw, and laid down on the ground upon the spot. Both men and women* engage in this operation, and they advance in a diagonal line across the field. They are not the common farm-laborers, but are hired by the day for the work. At the regular "meal-time," they gather under the shade of a tree and sit round a common dish furnished by the master of the field: the food they prefer is *leben* or sour milk, salad or pickles, which are cooling and refreshing in the midst of their heating employment. The poorest among the people, the widow and the orphan, are not unfrequently seen following the reapers, gleanings such ears of grain as may have been left behind.† The crop is sometimes pulled up by the roots with the hand instead of being cut with the sickle.‡ The weather being hot and the sun oppressive,§ a cruse or jar of water is kept in the shade of a tree or bush, and thither the laborers resort to quench their thirst.||

The threshing-floor is prepared upon some level spot, just

* Ruth ii., 8, 9.

† Lev. xix., 9.

‡ The word translated "pruning-hook" in our version occurs three times in the Old Testament, *i. e.*, in Isa. ii., 4; Joel iii., 10; and Mic. iv., 3. In every case the marginal reading is *scythe*, an instrument quite unknown in the East. The context, however, sufficiently indicates that the sacred writer had reference to the sickle, though it is mentioned elsewhere by another name.

§ 2 Kings iv., 18, 19.

|| Ruth ii., 9.

outside of the village or town,* and sometimes within its limits. When this, however, is not of easy access, the threshing-floors are situated at a little distance, and among the fields.† But whatever spot is selected for the purpose, it must lie somewhat higher than the surrounding ground, so that the rain may run off from its surface without injuring it. In preparing the threshing-floor, the ground is beaten hard by artificial means, and clay is laid over it and smoothed with a stone roller, after which it soon dries in the heat of the sun. The size of the floor depends upon the number of owners, or of heaps usually threshed at one time; and it must be observed that all the crop is generally threshed at once, so that but one process is gone through with on the same spot during the season. The sheaves are gathered by the laborers, and brought to the threshing-floors upon their shoulders, or upon the backs of asses, mules, or camels. In many portions of the country, the sheaves are piled into a rude cart, upon which they are kept from falling by a wicker-work about four feet high.‡ These carts, or *arabas*, are



Ox-cart bearing Sheaves. (Amos ii., 13.)

probably similar to those used by the Hebrews, and drawn by a pair of oxen.§ Their wooden wheels are solid, and thickest in the middle, encircled by an iron hoop, which is made fast around the edge by means of large-headed nails. These wheels

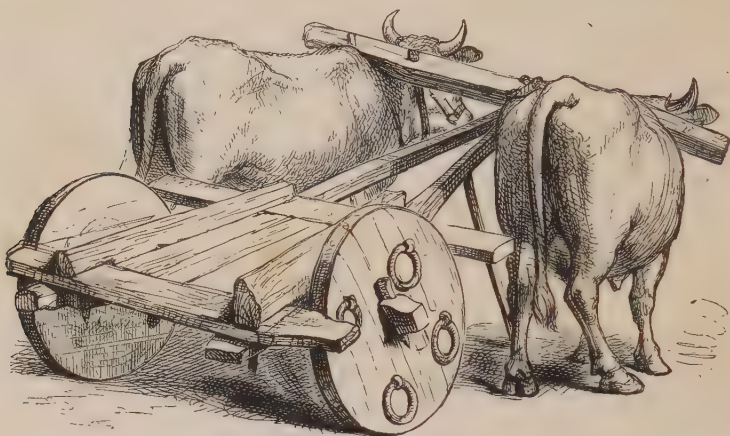
* 1 Chron. xxi., 15, 16.

† Amos ii., 13.

‡ Gen. i., 10.

§ 1 Sam. vi., 7.

are firmly fixed upon the axle-tree, which revolves with them under the body of the cart, giving forth unearthly sounds. The entire construction of this cart will be seen in the illustration here given: it is interesting both on account of the great an-

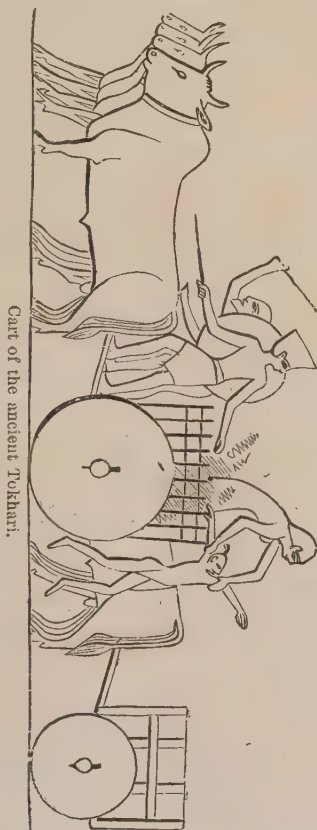


Oriental Ox-cart. (1 Sam. xl., 7.)

tiquity of its origin, and because it is the only wheeled vehicle known in Bible lands at the present time. A similar cart was used by a nation at war with the Egyptians; for it is depicted on one of their monuments, with its solid wooden wheels, and the frame upon the cart. The hieroglyphic name is Tokhari (see illustration on following page). The iron rings hung on the wheels to increase the noise are alone wanting; but these are by no means in general use even now.

The sheaves are thrown upon the threshing-floor in piles eight or ten feet high. They are threshed in a variety of ways. When mares are kept in the field, which is the case in many of the great plains of Western Asia, their owners employ or hire them out, during the harvest season, to tread the grain upon the threshing-floors, which is done as follows: the heaps of sheaves are first spread out evenly upon the floor, in a diameter of fifty or sixty feet. Seven or eight of the horses are then tied to each other by a single rope, so as to stand abreast from the centre to the circumference of the circle. The driver holds the end of the rope with one hand, or fastens it to an upright post in the centre, while with the other he whips the animals

to keep them moving abreast in a circle around him, as he stands in the middle of the heap. The outside horses of course have the most traveling to do, and so he frequently changes their relative position by holding in turn each of the extremities of the rope, so that the horses at the other end of the line alternately walk at the circumference or at the centre.* In many parts of the country, however, cattle are made use of in the same manner as horses.† Horses were generally too dear in ancient times to be owned by farmers, or to be put to such a use; and Herodotus states that swine were thus employed.‡ The illustration on the following page, however, would seem to prove that oxen were used anciently, as now, by the Egyptians in threshing their grain. It is copied by Wilkinson from one of the monuments of that land. But the most generally adopted mode of threshing consists in the use of a sort of sled made of thick boards, four or five feet in length, with many pieces of flint or iron set firmly in the wood of the under surface. This is drawn by a pair of oxen.§ Several sets of small wheels are sometimes used instead of flints. Two or three of these sleds are often at work on a single heap; and it is a striking fact that in all Western Asia, and even in India, it is the universal custom to allow the oxen or other animals thus employed freely to eat of the crop they are helping to harvest.|| The driver, generally a little boy, or perchance a girl, stands erect upon the sled, goad in hand, or



* Isa. xxviii., 28.

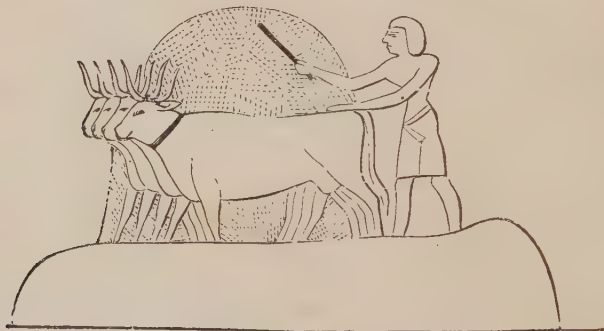
† Amos iv., 1; Mic. iv., 13.

‡ Herodotus, ii., 14.

§ 2 Sam. xxiv., 22; Isa. xli., 15; Varro, "De re Rustica," i., 52.

|| Deut. xxv., 4.

sits cross-legged, or enjoys the luxury of a stool or primitive chair. In this mode of threshing, however, the whole pile of sheaves is not leveled at once, as is usual in the former, but is allowed to stand in the centre, while the edges are gradually brought down and threshed until the whole pile is finished.



Oxen treading the Corn. (Deut. xxv., 4.)

The object aimed at by these processes is not simply to separate the grain from the ears, but also to cut and crush the straw, by which it is believed that the nourishing properties it contains are more fully developed. Horses and cattle certainly prefer straw thus prepared to that merely cut by any other process. This article, with barley, constitutes the chief sustenance of



Threshing-floor. (1 Chron. xxi., 23.)

horses, cattle, and camels, for hay is nowhere made in Palestine.* The grain and straw having thus been threshed, are heaped high in a long ridge or pile, preparatory to winnowing, for which purpose the chief instrument used is a large wooden shovel or "fan."† The sheaves had before been handled with a wooden fork of the same size.

About the month of May begins, all over Western Asia, the refreshing sea-breeze, which continues through the summer until the "former rains" at the end of September.‡ It is only along the Black Sea shore of Asia Minor that this breeze is interrupted by the frequent showers which come from the southwest, and which, while they maintain a rich vegetation through the summer, entail the necessity of putting the crops under cover as soon as cut. In Palestine and Syria, however, not a drop of rain usually falls after the first of May, though we have known a thunder-shower to occur on the first of June; but the event is rare, and is attended with much inconvenience to the farmers.§ The sun's heat increases, and the only danger to the crops, as they lie upon the threshing-floors, arises from the accidental or spontaneous combustion occasioned by carelessness in cutting the crops when not perfectly dry in the field. In such a case the flames spread with fearful rapidity,|| so that the utmost exertions can scarcely save any thing lying within the threshing-floors; should there be trees or bushes near by, there is danger of their taking fire, and thus the conflagration sometimes spreads quite a distance, consuming vineyards and olive-trees, before it can be arrested. The sea-breeze sets in about nine or ten o'clock in the morning, and is felt far in the interior. We have been refreshed by it two hundred miles from the sea-shore. It continues until after sunset, when it suddenly drops and the evening is perfectly calm. During the night there is a land-breeze, which blows in the opposite direction, toward the sea; but it is never strong. The sea-breeze is at its height about two or three o'clock in the afternoon, when it is of such a strength that the waves come dashing upon the shore; and it is at this time that the greatest activity prevails upon the

* Gen. xxiv., 32; 1 Kings iv., 28; Isa. xi., 7.

† Isa. xxx., 24; xli., 16; Matt. iii., 12.

‡ Deut. xi., 14; Jer. v., 24; Joel ii., 23, 24.

§ 1 Sam. xii., 16-18; Prov. xxvi., 1.

|| Ps. xxxv., 5.

threshing-floors, where the men may be seen tossing up the threshed grain with their wooden shovels. The wheat itself falls to the ground, while the straw or "chaff" is carried off by the wind,* and forms a heap at the distance of a few yards. It is removed in sacks, or in the carts which brought the crop to the floor, while the wheat or barley is further winnowed through sieves of different sizes, which clear out the small stones, lumps of earth, and foreign seeds.† The most troublesome of the latter are the tares (the weed commonly called *darud*, and in botany *Lolium temulentum*). Its kernels are somewhat smaller



Tares. (Matt. xiii., 25.)

than those of wheat, and the usual way to separate them is that adopted by the women, who sit at home with the children around a pile of wheat and patiently pick out the tares one by one. When allowed to remain in any quantity among the wheat, they mar the quality of the flour, and produce bitterness of taste, and even dizziness and nausea after eating. The accompanying illustration is a correct representation of this noxious plant, still called in Greek by its New Testament name.

* *Psa. i., 4.*

† *Isa. xxx., 24.*

Our Saviour's parable narrated in Matt. xiii., 24-30, refers to facts respecting tares, which may need some explanation. When the tares first spring up, they are in no way distinguishable from the wheat; the difference, however, begins to appear as soon as the ear comes in sight. This difference, slight at first, grows more and more marked as the seed ripens, so that by the time the field has grown yellow the ears of wheat can be distinguished from the tares at a single glance. Hence it is clear that, had the servants attempted to "root up" the tares while they were yet green, they would have been liable to mistake them for wheat, and *vice versa*. The mode of separation recommended by the Master also deserves our attention: it is the one resorted to when the tares are very abundant, rendering the process alluded to above altogether too tedious: the tares are first pulled up with the hands, bound in bundles by themselves, and burned, in order to prevent the increase of the noxious weed. Unlike the thrifty husbandman of the parable, who "sowed none but good" or picked "seed in his field," lazy farmers do not trouble themselves to pick the tares out of their seed-wheat before sowing it, claiming that tares are produced from wheat which undergoes a change by some unknown process during the progress of its growth.

While winnowing is going on, the tax-gatherer stands by and appropriates one-tenth as soon as the work is completed.* Under the oppressive system adopted by the Muslim governments of the present day, as under the Romans of old, the tithes are sold to the highest bidder, for a sum of money paid in advance, and the tithe-gatherers go through the land employing every device for the purpose of overreaching the cultivators of the soil, and obtaining from them more than their dues.† They are sustained in every dispute by the local authorities; and, worse than this, the farmers are strictly ordered not to thresh their grain before the tax-gatherers are ready, which is the means of additional extortions. We have known crops to remain heaped upon the threshing-floors for many weeks, and the distressed owners were not only obliged to watch them by day and by night, but had to contrive means to protect them from being wet by showers.

* 1 Sam. viii., 15.

† Luke iii., 13.

From the time that the crop begins to be laid upon the threshing-floor until it is entirely removed, after threshing and winnowing, every owner spends the night upon the edge of his heap, where he finds a convenient bed, and shelter from the night-breeze.* This he does for the purpose of guarding his property against thieves, and, when the floor is at a distance from the village, to save it from the depredations of the wild boars. In mountainous districts even stags and bears sometimes come down to get a share of the feast. Along the eastern side of Syria and Palestine, the farmers are often compelled to cut down the crops before they are fully ripe; for the Arabs come out of the desert and help themselves to the standing grain, which they load and carry away upon their horses.†

The wheat or barley is separated from the ear, when the quantity is small, by beating it out with a stick, and afterward throwing it up in the air and letting the wind carry away the stubble;‡ and with still smaller quantities, we not unfrequently see men rubbing several ears in the palms of their hands and blowing away the chaff while tossing up the grain, which they then eat unground and raw.§

We have described the chief processes of agriculture, those by which the cereals are obtained from the soil, for the support of the population; we must now briefly depict the mode of converting them into "bread, the staff" of life.||

Windmills are very rare in Palestine, though they abound in other parts of Western Asia, especially along the coast and upon the islands. Flour-mills worked by water-power are common in mountainous districts, but the inhabitants of the greater part of the country, as well as all who dwell in tents, are obliged to resort to the hand-mill, with which every household is provided. The process of converting wheat or barley into flour—for the poorer classes now, as of old,¶ have often to be content with the barley—is as follows: a cloth is spread upon the ground, and upon it is set a flat circular stone about two feet in diameter, and two inches in thickness, whose upper surface is somewhat convex, and in the centre of which an iron peg is

* Ruth iii., 7.

† Judg. vi., 3, 4.

‡ Ruth ii., 17.

§ Luke vi., 1.

|| Psa. cv., 16.

¶ 2 Kings iv., 42; John vi., 9.

firmly set upright. A similar stone, with a hole in its centre, is set upon the first, its lower surface somewhat concave, so that the two fit well together. Upon the upper surface of the latter, and near the rim, is inserted a wooden or iron peg six or eight inches high. A small pair of stones is turned by one person; the larger by two women,* who sit upon the ground



The Hand-mill. (Matt. xxiv., 41.)

face to face, with the hand-mill between them, having each a lapful of grain. Their right hands, the one above the other, hold the wooden peg, and thus they continually turn the upper stone, while the lower one remains stationary; the left hand, meanwhile, is busy taking grain and filling with it the hole in the upper stone, and the coarsely ground flour is constantly issuing from the side opening between the stones and falling upon the cloth.† In wealthy families this work is done by menials or slaves.‡ The blind also go from house to house to do the grinding, and thus earn a pittance.§

Every town is furnished with public ovens, where bread is

* Matt. xxiv., 41.

† Exod. xi., 5; Lam. v., 13.

‡ Isa. xlvii., 1, 2.

§ Judges xvi., 21.

made and sold. These ovens are built of baked bricks in the large towns, and occupy the innermost part of the little shop, whose street front consists of a large counter upon which the bread is sold. The oven itself is a chamber whose smooth floor, some four feet in diameter, is covered with flat bricks, and stands three feet above the ground. The sides and roof are arched, and the flue of the chimney is at the inner end. As the work commences at early dawn, since most of the sales take place in the morning, the workmen spend the night about the place, and may often be seen in the summer season sleeping at the side of the street.* The operation of baking begins by lighting a brisk fire all over the floor of the oven, and when its surface has become sufficiently heated the embers are raked out through the opening in the front, and the loaves of bread are laid and arranged on the floor of the oven with a long-handled wooden shovel. An iron door closes the oven until the baking is completed. These ovens are precisely of the form and size of the one discovered in Pompeii (dating from the second century of the Christian era), in which were found more than eighty loaves of bread calcined, but perfectly preserved. A little piece of dough is always kept for *leaven* from one baking till the next, when it is mixed in the meal by being worked in the dough, and thus the whole mass is leavened.† The size of a loaf varies in different places, though sold by weight. The more common form is round, somewhat flattened down, and five or six inches in diameter. A flat loaf is also in general use, half an inch in thickness, and twelve inches in diameter, round or oval in form. These kinds are leavened, and the last is often used instead of a dish or platter, upon which other food is placed. The more common bread used in all the interior, particularly in the rural districts, is a flat cake of unleavened dough, no thicker than a pancake, of a circular or oval form, and ten or twelve inches in diameter.‡ It is made of the flour obtained from the hand-mill, with the bran in it, and is baked in the following manner: Many houses are provided with an oven which consists of a hole in the ground some three feet deep, two feet in width at the top, and three at the bottom, and plastered within with clay. A brisk fire of branches and dried

* Hos. vii., 4.

† Matt. xiii., 33.

‡ Exod. xii., 39.

grass is lighted upon the bottom, where there is a flue to admit the air.* The women, to whom exclusively belongs this branch of household labor,† take a piece of dough of the required size, and quickly and repeatedly passing it from one hand to the other, make it into a thin cake. It is then laid upon a round cushion which is introduced within the oven, where it is pressed against one of its sides, to which it adheres until it is thoroughly baked or toasted, when it is removed by the experi-



A public Oven. (Hos. vii., 4.)

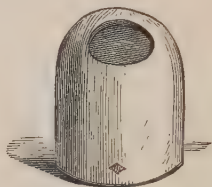
enced hand of the baker. The dwellers in tents carry and use an oven of similar form made of earthenware, and glazed within; it is, however, covered and spherical at the top, and the opening is on one side, while a small hole at the bottom takes the place of the flue. The illustration on the next page exhibits the close resemblance between the modern and the ancient Egyptian portable oven. Some use iron platters, which are heated by being laid upon the fire; and others, again, place the unleavened cake directly upon the coals.‡ These unleavened cakes are crisp and palatable, but hard to digest; they are al-

* Matt. vi., 30.

† Lev. xxvi., 26.

‡ 1 Kings xix., 6.

ways eaten soon after baking, and vie in unwholesomeness with our "hot biscuit." This form of bread is very convenient for the rude population of the villages, and especially for the wandering Arabs, who possess few of the commodities of civilization, and make these thin



Portable Ovens: 1, Ancient; 2, Modern. (Matt. vi., 30.)

cakes answer the purpose of a plate, spoon, table-cloth, and napkin. We have often seen them tear off a piece of the cake, shape it into the form of a spoon, eat with it several large mouthfuls of thick soup or curdled milk, and when it had become too soft to be further used in this way, eat up their spoon, and proceed by making another, as often as required.

It is worthy of notice, that, whatever kind of bread is eaten, whether the large soft loaf, or the thin cake, it is never cut with a knife, but *broken* with the hand. Hence the expression so common in the Scriptures, as well as in other Eastern writings, "to break bread," *i. e.*, to eat.* It is deemed wrong to apply a knife to bread. So, likewise, great care is used not to let it fall to the ground; should it chance to do so, it is carefully picked up and set upon the shelf.

Flour is not the only thing, however, nor bread the only article of food, into which wheat is converted. It is soaked in water, or even boiled, and, after being thoroughly dried in the sun, is ground in a light hand-mill, and enters as an ingredient into a variety of dishes, besides being the rival of rice in the national dish of *pilaf*, or *pilaw*, when it takes the name of *boorghoor*. Wheat is often kept in pits, very similar to wells, some ten or fifteen feet in depth, which are carefully closed, and thus hidden from the predatory Arabs. There is, perhaps, an allusion to such a pit in 2 Sam. xvii., 19. However this may be, the corn the women spread upon the mouth of the well clearly indicates that the Hebrews were in the habit of preparing *boorghoor* in the manner we have described. "Parched corn" is referred to in Lev. xxiii., 14; Ruth ii., 14; 1 Sam. xvii.,

* Matt. xv., 36; Acts xx., 7; 1 Cor. x., 16.

17; xxv., 18; 2 Sam. xvii., 28. It corresponds to the *kaly* of the Arabs, and is obtained in the following manner: When wheat is being harvested, some of the green ears are thrown upon the coals of fire and roasted; they are but partially divested of the hull by rubbing between the hands, and are very much relished. Both roasted and raw wheat is eaten whole, a custom which is referred to in some of the texts mentioned above.

CHAPTER IV.

GARDENING AND CULTIVATION BY IRRIGATION.

THE dryness of the climate of Western Asia renders impossible the raising of vegetables and certain varieties of fruit-trees, except with the aid of artificial irrigation. Most of the country lies dry and parched during a considerable portion of the year, at which period the apparent sterility is only mitigated by hardy trees scattered here and there, and still more hardy bushes which cover extensive tracts. The presence of a river, or even a torrent, can generally be detected at a considerable distance by the appearance of a richer vegetation upon its banks. The location of a town, village, or hamlet is, in like manner, marked by the island of verdure which embosoms it; for Orientals always build near a river, spring, or well of water. The village itself is very generally unshaded by trees. The gardens are usually planted just outside; then come the inclosed vineyards, which are not watered;* and beyond all lie the cultivated fields, looking perfectly barren and dry as soon as the crop has been removed.

No country in the world depends upon artificial irrigation to such a degree as the land of Egypt.† Rain rarely falls beyond a short distance inland from the Mediterranean Sea;‡ within this narrow limit the only extraordinary feature in the hailstorm which constituted one of the ten plagues sent upon King Pharaoh, was its extreme severity;§ but to the inhabitants of Memphis and Upper Egypt so terrible and unprecedented a visitation must have produced the greatest awe and consternation.||

* 1 Kings xxi., 1.

† Deut. xi., 10, 11.

‡ Zech. xiv., 18.

§ Exod. ix., 24.

|| Exod. ix., 28. The severity of the hailstorm which constituted one of Egypt's ten plagues is not without its parallel in the same lands in modern times. Not many years ago hailstones fell at Constantinople which are described as "of the size and shape of small saucers;" several persons were killed by them. But the most ter-

The river Nile rises far to the south, toward the centre of the continent, and in a region of mountains, forests, and extensive lakes, which have but recently been brought to the knowledge of the civilized world by the English travelers Speke and Baker. It is swollen at appointed seasons by the rains of those elevated tracts, and carries off the rich vegetable remains of a tropical climate. In Egypt the Nile is confined between high banks; a well upon an island near Cairo contains the nilometer, which consists of a pillar with a scale marking the height reached by the water. Experience has established both the average rise and that which is required to supply the wants of the land. When a sufficient height has been attained, the order is given, all the outlets are opened in the river banks, and the water is allowed to spread over the country. This now assumes the appearance of a sea, the villages, built upon the highest spots, alone standing out of the water.

The quantity of water brought down by the Nile, however, varies very much from year to year, doubtless owing to the amount of rain falling in the region of its head-waters and those of its tributaries. An unusually abundant as well an unusually scanty flood are alike detrimental to the crops. The ancients, therefore, devised and executed a stupendous work, by which they prepared and enlarged a natural basin, existing at a little distance from the western bank of the river, in Upper Egypt. They placed it in communication with the Nile by means of a canal and sluices; and the author of this work erected two pyramids, surmounted with colossal figures, in the middle of this lake, which covered a surface of more than five hundred square miles. The river begins to rise about the 20th of June. When beyond a certain height, the superfluous waters are made to flow into the above-mentioned Lake Fayoom; and when the flood has proved insufficient, the sluices of this lake are opened in December, and the country is supplied with the needed moisture. By this means the land is saved from the frequent recurrence of famine, to which it

rific hailstorm we have heard of occurred at Marmaritza, on the southern shore of Asia Minor, in 1801, while the British fleet lay there. "On the 8th of February," says Sir R. Wilson, "commenced the most violent thunder and hail storm ever remembered, and which continued two days and nights intermittingly. The hail, or rather ice stones, were as big as walnuts."—CLARKE, 168.

would otherwise be liable. Lake Fayoom is universally attributed to one of the Egyptian kings, Moëris by name, who lived 1700 years B.C. This brings us to the time of Joseph, who appeared before Pharaoh to interpret his dream, in the year 1715 B.C. Hence it would appear that Lake Fayoom did not exist before the days of Joseph. Its use would doubtless have prevented the terrible famine of seven years, which compelled the Egyptians to sell their land, their cattle, and their very persons to their king.* Moëris must have been the Pharaoh who received the Hebrews into Egypt, and Lake Fayoom, which anciently bore the name of Moëris, after the king, was doubtless constructed, as far as it is a work of art, under the impression of that terrible dearth. The great and ancient canal which admits the waters of the Nile into Lake Moëris, and through which they are let out again upon the land, is to this day called by the natives Balr Yoosoof, the water of Joseph—a further confirmation of the above statement.† It is interesting thus to trace not only the evidence of the truth of Scripture, but the influence of a great and good man upon the welfare of a nation during the space of thirty-five centuries.

There is another circumstance worthy of our attention. All the water in Egypt comes from the Nile, and though muddy at the best, long use makes the inhabitants prefer it to any other for drinking.

The annual flooding of Egypt by the Nile, and the deposition of the abundant earthy and vegetable matter with which it is then charged, has gradually raised the surface of the entire valley in which it flows. The proofs of this are numerous. All the ancient historians agree in stating that the Egyptians erected their principal buildings upon platforms so high that they could not be reached by the swollen Nile; but they now stand far below that level. It is calculated that the average rise of the surface of the whole valley of Egypt amounts to about five inches in a century.

Marcel, in his "Modern Egypt," makes the following interesting statement: "As the swollen waters of the river pass over its banks and inundate the land, the heavier or sandy

* Gen. xlvii., 15–23.

† Pococke, i., 60.

particles they bear are naturally deposited in its immediate vicinity, while the lighter and the vegetable substances are carried beyond, and spread over the face of the plain. When the river retires within its banks, its waters percolate through the adjacent sand into a sort of reservoir formed by the underlying clay; and the inhabitants obtain this water by sinking wells of moderate depth in the neighborhood of the river.”* This account agrees with Pococke’s statement, who says that “all over the land of Egypt, if they dig down lower than the surface of the Nile (in its vicinity), they find water, though the soil being mostly salt, the water is brackish.”†

The foregoing quotations furnish a simple and rational explanation of a circumstance which would otherwise seem difficult of solution, in the Mosaic account of the ten plagues. When the waters of the Nile had been turned to blood, Pharaoh and his people, it is said, dug wells in the vicinity of the river, and, obtaining potable water, hardened their hearts, and refused to hearken to the warnings of the prophet—a statement which fully agrees with the present condition of things in that land.‡

The surface of Egypt is cut up by an infinite number of canals, which convey the water to every field and patch of cultivated ground. A great deal of the legislation both of ancient and modern Egypt had for its object the prevention or the settlement of disputes about the use of the precious element. This is found to occur wherever the supply of water is small, and the heat of the climate requires man to employ its aid in cultivating the ground. It is so even in pastoral countries. The herdsmen of Abraham and the servants of Abimelech strove together for the well of Beer-sheba,§ and the patriarch was obliged to separate from Lot, his nephew, on account of the disputes about water which arose between their respective herdsmen, in consequence of the great increase of their cattle.||

The waters of the Nile are celebrated for their fertilizing power. In whatever spot they are allowed to leave their precious deposit, there a rich and vigorous vegetation springs up at once. The barren sand itself can not resist the fructifying in-

* “Modern Egypt,” p. 72.

§ Gen. xxi., 25.

† Pococke, i., 24.

|| Gen. xiii., 5-7; xxvi., 17-22.

‡ Exod. vii., 24.

fluence. Were it not for this, the channels which conduct it to the sea would soon be choked with the movable sand, and the now fertile and flourishing Delta would be changed to a broad and uninhabitable morass. Green branches set into the banks sprout up, and soon become strong and thrifty trees, whose roots mingling with plants and reeds of spontaneous growth, give them a firmness which resists the wear of centuries. It is only by conveying the waters of the Nile to the Suez Canal through an ancient channel, which had for many ages been abandoned, that this interoceanic means of communication will be enabled to resist the encroaching sand of the desert.

The Egyptian husbandman sows his seed, according to its nature, at various stages of the inundation. Rice, for instance, is thrown upon the water when it has become confined within the limits of the little square beds into which the soil is divided for the purpose. These beds are separated by narrow causeways, or paths of raised earth, upon which the laborer treads, dry-shod, as he passes from bed to bed in the prosecution of his task. It is probably to this or a similar process that Solomon has reference when he says, "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.*" "Waters," in the plural, sometimes indicates a division of water—that is, numerous rivulets or pools of water. These remarks are applicable not to Egypt alone, for the same process may be observed in all parts of Western Asia as far eastward as Persia, wherever cultivation is carried on by irrigation, and the land is divided into small beds.

The wealthy and influential in Egypt, both anciently and in our own day, have availed themselves of their position to open the sluices in the river or in the larger canals, in order to water their own lands, to the great detriment of their poorer neighbors. This abuse was carried so far, that the Emperor Arcadius, in the beginning of the fifth century, forbade it, under penalty of death or banishment to the oases of the desert. A similar practice is still common in all parts of Western Asia: the pashas of Constantinople bribe the keepers of the *Bends*, or public reservoirs of the capital, and thus obtain a large supply for their flower-gardens and the fountains that play in their

* Eccles. xi., i.

courts; while the poor are crowding at the public fountains, fiercely disputing possession of the slowly-trickling stream which is all that is left for the thirsty multitude.*

But the process of watering can not, in such a climate as that of Egypt, be confined to the yearly inundation of the Nile. Many plants require frequent irrigation during their growth.

The ancients are represented in their monuments as watering their gardens from adjoining tanks, by means of pails or pots suspended from the extremities of a yoke borne across the shoulders, or with pails simply held in the hand. This work is done at the present day by the lowest class of menials or servants, both in Egypt and in all the East, and Moses doubtless referred to this as a sign of the degradation to which the Hebrews had been reduced in the land of bondage.†

The usual mode, however, of watering, out of the season of the inundation, is by means of the *shadoof*, well described in



Modern Shadoof.

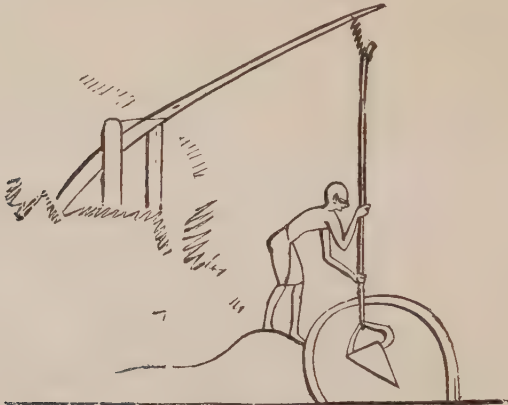
the following passage from Lane's excellent work on the Modern Egyptians: "The shadoof consists of two posts or pillars of wood, or of mud and canes or rushes, about five feet in height and less than three apart, with a horizontal piece of wood extending from top to top, to which is suspended a

* Prov. ix., 17.

† Lev. xxvi., 13.

slender lever formed of a branch of a tree, having at one end a weight chiefly composed of mud, and at the other, suspended from two long palm-sticks, a vessel in the form of a bowl made of basket-work or a hoop, and a piece of woollen stuff or leather. With this vessel the water is thrown up to the height of about eight feet into a trough hollowed out for its reception."*

This mode of raising the water of the river for the purpose of irrigation was practiced by the ancient Egyptians as by the moderns; and, in order to add another illustration of the preservation of ancient customs in the East, we give the reader pictures both of a modern and of an ancient shadoof, as it stands on the carved granite of the Pharaohs.



Ancient Shadoof.

We have dwelt at length upon the system of irrigation practiced in Egypt, because it is now, as it has ever been, the all-engrossing characteristic of that peculiar land.

Mesopotamia was also a country full of rivers and canals, and as celebrated in ancient times for its fertility as the valley of Egypt; but it is so no longer, and the causes which have wrought so great a change are worthy of a passing notice.

Mesopotamia consists of a great plain, which stretches from the Koordish Mountains on the north, and the Taurus on the west, to the Persian Gulf. It is watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris; the first of which, rising in the mountains

* Lane, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., 24.

of Ararat,* flows westward, then southward through Mount Taurus, and finally emerging into the plain, separates it from the Arabian desert as it courses south-easterly to the sea. The Tigris has its source near the same spot, but keeps closer to the Koordish Mountains, whence it receives some important tributaries, and gradually approaching the Euphrates, unites with it, forming a single channel which empties into the Persian Gulf.

These rivers are swollen every spring by the melting snows. Their waters contain no fertilizing power, like the Nile, which is charged with vegetable matter; but the land they irrigate, instead of being sand, like Egypt, is composed of the richest alluvial loam. The natural tendency of these rivers has been to overflow their banks in the spring, which, though productive of immediate fertility, has a tendency in the course of time to injure the land; hence the ancients, by an extensive system of canals and lakes, labored to prevent the inundation, and collected the surplus waters into reservoirs, whence they could be drawn out for the gradual irrigation of the fields and gardens.

The Euphrates, whose spring "swellings" greatly surpass those of the Tigris, has also a higher bed, and the ancients had cut a broad canal—now called "Nahr Melka" (the Royal Canal), with solid banks built of burned bricks, which eased the river of its excessive waters by conveying them to the Tigris. On the west side of the Euphrates an immense lake was dug—now known as the Sea of Kerbela—whose shores were also strengthened by embankments of bricks. This lake was connected with the river by a wide canal, and similarly, with another artificial lake of still greater extent, which communicated with the Persian Gulf. These two lakes received the water of the inundation and distributed it among the canals of the neighboring region. Moreover, both rivers were dammed in many places, for the purpose of drawing off the waters into the adjoining lands—a sluice being left in the middle of the dam for the passage of boats down the stream. Many of these massive walls may yet be seen, as well as the remains of numberless canals, some of which are used at the present day.† This

* Morier, i., 306.

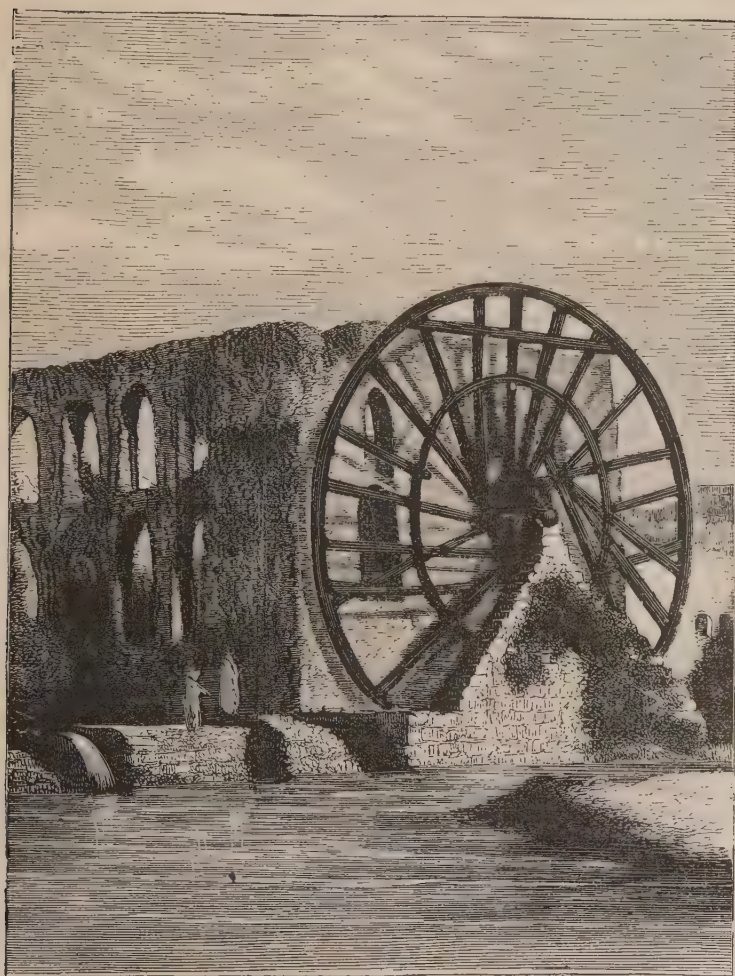
† Psa. cxxxvii., 1. In Jer. li., 36, the word translated "sea" evidently refers to canals: see also Jer. i., 38.

complete system of irrigation accounts for the extraordinary fertility of Mesopotamia, and particularly of Chaldea; for the ancient Greek writers are agreed in representing it as unsurpassed in any part of the globe. According to Herodotus, "there were two crops of wheat every year, yielding two hundred and even three hundred fold, the ears of wheat and barley often attaining the length of four digits, or three and a half inches."* But this remarkable land, possessing in itself such immense sources of wealth, was ill adapted for defense against an invading foe. As long as it was superior in civilization to its neighbors, and could contend with horses, chariots, and engines of war against rude barbarians, it formed one of the greatest empires the world ever saw. But it was reduced, and gradually devastated by the successive incursions of rapacious enemies. A careful observer of its history and present condition can clearly trace its ruin to the filling up of the canals and the destruction of the means of irrigation, by which all the lower part of the country has been changed into a vast swamp, and the annual inundations have gradually laid a covering of sand upon a soil naturally most productive.†

Though the rivers of Western Asia are liable to be greatly swollen by heavy rains and the melting of the snows upon the mountains, yet their usually high banks prevent extensive inundations; such floods as do occasionally occur produce injury instead of benefit to the surrounding regions. Various contrivances, however, are employed in order to apply their waters to the purposes of agriculture. Canals are sometimes cut in the soil, and small streams are turned off bodily in the desired direction. At Antioch, on the Orontes, at Hamath, higher up the same river, and in places in Asia Minor similarly situated, upon the banks of streams of considerable volume and current, the neighboring gardens are watered in the following manner: A large wheel some fifteen feet in diameter is set up-right in such a way that the lower portion dips into the flowing stream. The extremities of the axle-tree are set on the one side in the solid bank of the river, which is strengthened with masonry, and on the other side in a frame of strong beams firmly planted in the river-bed, or in a stone-wall built

* Clio, 193.

† Isa. xiv., 23.



Persian River-wheel.

parallel to the river-bank. Pieces of board are fastened along the edge of the wheel, which act like paddles when struck by the current, causing the whole machine to revolve. Wooden buckets are fastened to the circumference, and these alternately dip into the water, rise to the top, and pour their contents into a trough, whence the water flows to the gardens. A low dam, built diagonally across the river, turns the entire stream upon "the wheel" when the water is low; while the swollen

stream sweeps over the dam without injuring the wheel. This mode of conveying water from a lower to a higher level was also practiced by the ancients; for it is spoken of as "the machine" by which the water of the Euphrates was raised to the summit of the "hanging gardens" of Babylon, a height of three hundred and fifty feet.*

When a perennial spring exists at the head of a valley, it is carried along its sloping side by means of a canal, and is thence drawn off into the gardens and orchards below. The remains of ancient works of this nature are numerous throughout the land, and indicate that massive aqueducts were often constructed for the purpose.

The privilege of using this water is paid for according to the quantity, which is measured by the size of the pipes and the number of hours daily during which it is allowed to run. This payment is made to the owner of the spring, who enjoys thence an important income.† The chief current, thus conducted through a garden, is made to flow along rows of such fruit-trees as most need its moisture, as the pomegranate, apricot, quince, orange, lemon, and mulberry, which are thus secured against the possibility of drought.‡ The ground is leveled and laid out in beds, each of which is bordered by a rim of soil wide enough for the gardener to walk upon. As each bed in turn is watered, a little heap of mud closes up the opening previously made, and the current runs on to the next bed. The instrument employed in doing this has the form of



1. Pruning-saw (Lev. xxv., 3); 2. Pocket-knife (John xv., 2); 3. Hoe (Luke xiii., 8); 4. Mattock.

a hoe, but the handle is only two feet long, while the iron portion of it is much larger than that of our hoe, and is in shape

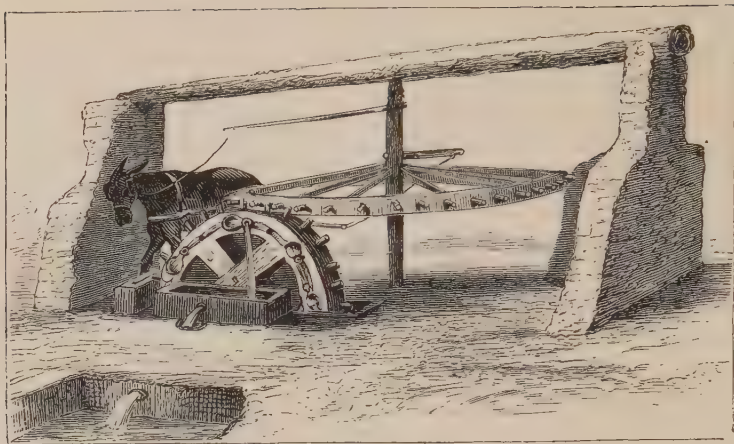
* Diod. Sic., lib. 2.

† Judges i., 15; . . . ‡ Psa. i., 3; Jer. xvii.; 8.

somewhat concave. It takes up at once the requisite amount of mud, which is laid across the opening, and pressed by the bare foot of the gardener, so as completely to arrest the farther ingress of the water; much of the watering, however, is done simply with the feet, and this is particularly the case in Egypt. The process is alluded to in Deut. xi., 10, which indicates that gardening was a common employment of the Israelites while in Egypt, where nothing grew without irrigation; whereas Palestine, whither they were going, was watered by the rains and dews of heaven,* so that a resort to irrigation would be the exception. Philo, however, describes a process of watering which existed in Egypt in his day, to which some have thought that Moses referred in the passage just quoted. "A wheel is turned by a man with the motion of his feet, by ascending the several steps that are within it. But as, while he is thus continually turning, he can not keep himself up, he holds a stay in his hands, and this supports him; so that in this work the hands do the office of the feet and the feet that of the hands; since the hands, which should act, are at rest, and the feet, which should be at rest, are in action, and give motion to the wheel." In modern times, Niebuhr saw a similar machine in Cairo, which he terms *sakieh te-dur bir-regel* (a watering-machine that turns by the foot). The distribution of the water among the beds is doubtless referred to in Prov. xxi., 1.

But it is more generally the case that water can be obtained neither from a spring nor from a river, but only from a well, and the ingenuity of the inhabitants has contrived to meet this difficulty by a machine similar in principle to the river-wheel, already described. The mouth of the well is made wide enough to introduce a wheel some eight or nine feet in diameter. To this wheel are suspended two long ropes with wooden buckets, or earthen jars, fastened in such a way as to be carried up and down as the wheel revolves, each bucket in turn descending into the water, filling up, and being raised to the top of the wheel, where it is turned over, and discharges its contents into a wooden trough, and thence into the garden. This wheel revolves by means of a smaller horizontal wheel set in motion by a mule or an ass harnessed to a pole, which

* Deut. xi., 11.



Sakkieh, or Well-wheel.

walks blindfold round and round the well, to the incessant, monotonous music of the ungreased machine. This mode of garden irrigation is very extensively used in Western Asia: we have seen it in a few places near the sea-shore, with the substitution of a windmill for the rotating mule.

The soil in the fields is rarely manured, as already shown, but means are used to enrich the soil wherever irrigation can be employed.* For this purpose the manure of the horse, the ass, the sheep, and the goat is exclusively employed; while that of the ox and the camel is dried in the sun, and used as fuel.† By these means a garden is almost constantly in a productive state, a succession of crops being obtained from the same spot in the entire course of the year.

The vegetables more commonly grown in these lands are beans, of which there are several varieties, eaten in the pod and also dried.‡ The variety of peas cultivated is of large size, but used for culinary purposes only when dry. Beets, turnips, carrots, and radishes are of a fine quality, and produced in abundance. The okra is extensively cultivated; the black egg-plant and the tomato are favorites, and attain a large size. Squashes and gourds abound. One variety of the latter is made into bottles and dippers. The gourd is cut near the

* Luke xiii., 8.

† Ezek. iv., 12-15.

‡ 2 Sam. xvii., 28; Ezek. iv., 9.

stem and dried, and the seeds being shaken out, it becomes a convenient bottle to keep articles which it is desirable to preserve from the damp, such as pepper, salt, etc. The gourd flask of the hunter keeps his powder most effectually dry, and is often tastefully carved. A rude guitar is also made of a large-sized gourd.

Another species of gourd grows to a length of three or four feet, and is two inches thick. It is made into a very agreeable preserve, cooked in honey or grape-juice boiled down. The gourd is a climbing vine of rapid growth, always trained to run up trees, trellis, and temporary booths, the size of its leaves affording a pleasant shade. The fruit, though large, is not heavy, and hangs on the vines, swinging and drying in the wind. The gourd-vine, however, is very liable to be destroyed by grubs or worms, which attack the root, in which case it withers and dries up immediately, owing to its light and pulpy texture.* The graceful form of the gourd, its golden blossoms, and the beautiful outline of its leaves, doubtless led to its adoption in Palestine as an architectural ornament, while the Greeks and Romans took the grape-vine for their model, whose bacchanalian associations must have been repulsive to the pious Hebrews. The gourd-vine entered into the architectural details of Solomon's Temple: "And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops" (in the margin *gourds*) "and open flowers" of the gourd-vine.†

Lettuce, parsley, mint, and other herbs, are in constant use.‡ The mustard-seed mentioned in Mark iv., 31, 32, grows on the edges of the fields in the Jordan valley, and often attains the height of a tall man. Our Lord's meaning was not that mustard was the smallest seed ever sown in a garden in his day. "Small as a grain of mustard" was doubtless a proverbial expression among the Jews. The Oriental tailor in our day says to his apprentice, "Make your stitches as small as sesame seeds," *i. e.*, as small as possible.

Lentils are produced in all parts of the country, and being a very nourishing article of food, they are favorites with the

* Jonah iv., 5-7. The words respecting the gourd, Jonah iv., 10, "which came up in a night," literally "which was the son of the night," is a poetical antithesis to "perished in a night." No gourd grows up in a single night.

† 1 Kings vi., 18.

‡ Matt. xxiii., 23.

hard-working man. They are cooked whole in the form of soup,* and are called in Arabic *ades*—the *adesh* which Esau bought with his birthright.

Cabbages are extensively cultivated, and cooked in a variety of ways. No garden is complete without its patch of onions and garlic, considered by an Oriental as among the necessities of life. These are eaten crude, as a relish, when green, just as Europeans use celery and radishes. When dry, they enter into almost every dish. The dried and pressed beef, called *pasturma*, which forms part of the winter provision of most families, is strongly flavored with them. They are raised in abundance by the modern Egyptians. Judging from the strong predilection of Orientals for these vegetables, we can not wonder that the Israelites longed for “the leeks and the onions and the garlic” of Egypt. It is said that an eminent divine of one of our chief cities “used annually to retire to a secluded lake in the State of Maine in order to rusticate and eat onions.” He must have thoroughly sympathized with the poor Israelites in their forty years’ privation of their favorite vegetable!†

Before describing the cultivation of the vine, we should mention that nearly every garden has a vine growing in it, which is trained upon some wood-work or frame often set against the wall of a house; or it shades some smooth, grassy spot. Here, frequently, is the tank or basin from which the garden is watered, adorned, it may be, with a jetting fountain. This cool shade is a favorite resort for the family and friends, and here they often eat their meals. The vine is also sometimes trained so as to shade the flat-terraced roofs of the houses, where the heat compels many of the inhabitants to sleep at night.

We often meet in the Bible with the expression “dwelling under one’s own vine and fig-tree,”‡ as a figure of prosperity, security, and domestic felicity; and it will be seen by the foregoing description, with that given farther on of the fig-tree, that an Oriental can not be said to enjoy the indispensable sources of pleasure and comfort when he possesses neither vine nor fig-tree, to whose grateful shade he may resort.

* In French “potage” (Gen. xxv., 34). † Numb. xi., 5. ‡ Isa. xxxvi., 16.

Melons and cucumbers are generally raised in fields or patches of ground of a sandy nature, watered by the spring flood of an adjacent stream, or otherwise irrigated. They are exceedingly refreshing in the heats of Palestine and Egypt.* The water-melons of Jaffa are celebrated for their lusciousness. Cucumbers throughout the land are of a superior kind, and are often eaten raw and unpeeled, even by little children. Melon-patches are enriched with a sort of guano obtained from the dove-cotes; and for this purpose many villages possess a dove or pigeon house, often constructed of better materials than the peasants' own homes. It is built of stone of an oblong shape, twelve or fifteen feet in length, and twenty or thirty in height, without a roof; the walls are furnished on the inside with shelves of the same material. A small door on one side is kept locked, and the key is in the possession of the sheik of the village. The pigeons feed in the surrounding fields, and are protected by the whole community.



Pigeon-houses. (Isa. lx., 8.)

In Persia these pigeon-houses are large round towers, rather broader at the base than at the top, and crowned by conical spiracles through which the pigeons descend. The interior resembles a honey-comb, pierced with a thousand holes, each of which forms a snug retreat for a nest; they are often painted and ornamented externally.† The vast clouds of birds often seen flying in the air and alighting upon the pigeon-house are aptly described in Isa. lx., 8.‡ The value of the manure may be judged from the fact that the yearly income of a single pigeon-house often amounts to three hundred dollars. In the account of the siege of Samaria the distress of the inhabitants is aptly described, not only by the high price

* Numb. xi., 5, 6.

† Morier, ii., 140.

‡ The word "windows" here means the nests or "pigeon-holes" into which the interior is divided.

paid for food, but also by the expression "the fourth part of a cab (or about a pint) of dove's dung was sold for five pieces of silver;"* by which we understand that manure for the gardens, within the city walls which furnished most of the available food, was difficult to obtain on account of the siege.

The common pigeon of Palestine abounds in Egypt, Persia, and Asia Minor. His color is blue, fading into white below. He builds his nest in the rocks, ruins, old cisterns, and pigeon-



Common Pigeon of Palestine. (Isa. xxxviii., 14.)

houses of the villages. He is quite tame, for the natives never kill him. He is probably the original of the carrier-pigeons, tumblers, crested pigeons, and others, of which there is a great variety in Turkey. Carrier-pigeons are now found at Tarsoos; but no use has been made of their peculiar instinct since the days of the Crusaders.

When the melons begin to ripen, the owners build a "lodge," "booth," or "watch-tower," generally consisting of four poles set upright in the ground, supporting a platform sufficiently raised to escape the damp and secure an elevated position to the watchman, with a roof and walls of green branches to protect him from the burning sun and falling dew. Here sits the watchman day and night, with his cruse of water at his side, on the alert for thieves that might steal the fruit, and especially for the foxes, jackals, and hares, whose more stealthy inroads are difficult to guard against. After the crop has been gathered in, and the "lodge" left to weather the rains and storms of winter, it presents a peculiarly forsaken and desolate aspect. No simile could be more apt and striking to the Oriental mind than that of the prophet in Isa. i., 8.

The sugar-cane originated and still grows in Syria and Egypt, whence it is conveyed to all parts of Western Asia, and is esteemed a delicacy.† Two passages in the Old Testament appear to allude to it under the name of "sweet cane."‡ Some

* 2 Kings vi., 25. † Michaud, "Croisades," 211. ‡ Isa. xliii., 24; Jer. vi., 20.



Watchman's Booth. (Job xxvii., 18.)

have thought that these texts contain a reference to a sweet-scented reed found in one of the valleys of Mount Lebanon; but the expression "bought with money" seems to imply that it was an article of merchandise, like the sugar-cane at present; while the words "from a far country," immediately following the mention of Ethiopia, favor the idea of its coming from the Upper Nile.

CHAPTER V.

VINEYARDS, AND THE USES OF THE GRAPE AND THE OLIVE.

THE cultivation of the vine and of the olive-tree is so frequently alluded to in the Scriptures that we propose to devote particular attention to the subject.

The variety of grapes is very great, and each kind is best adapted to a special use. The fruit of the climbing vines matures later than any other; it is also the largest, and the skin being thicker, it keeps the longest, and may be obtained in very good condition as late as the month of March. The largest clusters are selected for keeping, and hung with strings from the ceiling of a well-ventilated room, which is sheltered from the winter's cold.

Of the fruit of the vines, which are kept low, the white varieties are generally preferred, for eating fresh, on account of their superior flavor and the delicacy of their skins. Orientals always eat the grape whole, as experience has taught them that the skins and the seeds contain an astringent quality which renders this fruit at once the most wholesome and harmless of any. The raisins of the white grape are also superior in delicacy to the other varieties. The finest raisins are made from a small grape containing no seed. It is called Sultanine, or the small Sultana grape, to distinguish it from the larger variety—not seedless—bearing the same name, which is also dried and its raisins highly esteemed. But the smallest raisin known is made from a diminutive black grape, grown exclusively upon the Gulf of Corinth. It is known in the West by the name of currants, or “Zante currants,” being exported from the port of Zante. The Greeks call them *coranti*, which the French have translated into *raisins de Corinthe*; and being first introduced into England from France, the French name was abbreviated into *currants*. Our common garden currants* doubtless derive their name from their resemblance in size.

* Called in the East Frank grapes.

The process of curing grapes, or of converting them into raisins, is as follows: long strips of coarse cloth or matting are spread upon the smooth ground—the poor use the uncovered earth or rock—and the clusters, being cut from the vines, are dipped in very strong lye, and laid upon the cloth to dry in the hot sun, which requires several days. The raisins are then carefully separated from the dry stems, and packed in bags, ready for use. They are, however, in some parts of the country dried in clusters. This fruit is not simply an article of luxury; it forms an important part of the diet of the people, and is regularly laid up with other provisions of the household. A man often makes a meal simply of bread and raisins. Among the Hebrews it seems not to have been the custom to strip the raisins from the stems, but to dry them in the bunch, as is now done in the district of Malaga, in Spain.*

We have seen as many as thirty-five varieties of grapes raised in a single vineyard, but this is rare: three or four kinds is the ordinary limit.

The general practice, however, is to plant but one species of vine in a vineyard. If it be that kind whose grapes are to be eaten fresh, they are gathered in baskets as fast as they ripen, and loads of them are sent to market.† If it be a vineyard whose fruit is annually made into raisins, the whole crop is gathered and dried at once. When, however, the article to be produced is wine, with a certain quantity of sirup, the grapes are brought to the wine-press attached to the owner's premises, or they are furnished by weight to the wine-makers according to previous contract; the tax-gatherer meeting them at their entrance into the town, and levying the accustomed tenth part.‡

It is more commonly the case, however, that particular districts grow, with success, some particular kind of grape, for which they become celebrated. The Zante currants, grown on the Gulf of Corinth, have already been mentioned. The region of Smyrna is, in like manner, celebrated for the "seedless raisins" which it exports. The promontory of Chalcedon, opposite Constantinople, produces the finest edible grape to be found in

* 1 Sam. xxv., 18; xxx., 12; 2 Sam. xvi., 1; 1 Chron. xii., 40.

† Neh. xiii., 15.

‡ 1 Sam. viii., 15.

the East, called the *chaoosh* grape. The land of Judah is still celebrated for the size and excellence of its grapes, which, as a general rule, succeed best in similar hilly districts. There was situated the Vale of Eshcol, whence the spies sent by Moses procured the huge cluster of grapes mentioned in Numb. xiii., 23, 24;* and it is affirmed that even now clusters of grapes are found in that locality weighing no less than twelve pounds; bunches weighing twenty pounds are often seen elsewhere. The cluster of Eshcol was borne with its branch upon a staff between two men, to prevent its being injured, and not on account of its great weight. We ourselves have seen single grapes of the size of the largest damask plum, and have found clusters measuring eighteen inches in length.† We have also counted more than seven hundred grapes on a single bunch.

Western Asia certainly ought to be the most favorable climate for the cultivation of this fruit, for it is indigenous to the soil; and the wild vines growing in some parts of Armenia and Georgia are of extraordinary luxuriance and size. Strabo speaks of wild vines in Armenia whose stems were so large as to require two men to span them, and some of whose clusters measured two cubits in length;‡ and Gmelin, in his "Travels through Russia and Northern Persia," states that "the wild vine on the shores of the Caspian Sea winds itself about the loftiest forest-trees, and its tendrils, which here have an arm's thickness, so spread and entangle themselves far and wide, that in places where it grows in the most luxuriant wildness it is very difficult to find a passage."§

The process of planting a vineyard and guarding it with a hedge or wall may be described as follows: the ground having been selected and traced, a ditch is dug along the outside, three or four feet in width and two in depth, the earth being piled upon its inner edge. Into this pile stout posts are firmly set, about four feet in height, and branches are twisted and woven in among them, making a thick and solid fence or hedge. A vineyard is cultivated for successive centuries, but the vines must be occasionally changed, and at such a time the ground lies fal-

* See Gen. xlix., 11.

† In Armenia grape-kernels are often seen an inch and a half, and two inches and upward, in length.—USSHER, 229, 273.

‡ "Geography," bk. ii., ch. i., § 14.

§ "Travels," vol. iii., p. 431.

low for several years. The Hebrews left their vineyards untilled every seventh year, as well as the fiftieth or Jubilee year.* In process of time many wild plants, briars, and some few shrubs and trees spring up and grow within the shadow of the hedge, and, fed by the moisture collected in the ditch, make the inclosure more solid and capable of resisting incursions from man or beast. Still the husbandman is obliged, from time to time, to examine all parts of the hedge, and close up any gap or breach made by the foxes, jackals, badgers, hares, and still more diminutive hedgehogs.† It is only when the vineyard proves unproductive, or the quality of the grapes hopelessly bad, that the proprietor neglects the hedge and allows it to fall to pieces, so that even the wild boar may come and join in its destruction.‡ In regions where trees and bushes are not abundant for making a hedge, as is the case in many parts of Syria and Palestine, uncemented stone-walls, or walls built of mud-bricks dried in the sun, are used as a substitute. In Isa. v., 2, the word *fenced* means *walled*. In many parts also a wall is built of earth, in the following manner: a box, answering somewhat the purpose of a mould, some six feet in length and two or three in height, without top or bottom, is set up on the spot where the wall is to be erected, and the workmen, as they dig the ditch, throw the earth into this box; it is there trodden by the bare feet of their companions until the box is full, when it is lifted off, leaving the earth standing in a solid block, and is set up again at the extremity of this newly raised portion of the wall. The work then proceeds as before until the entire inclosure is completed. A second row of blocks is produced in the same manner: they set sticks across the top of the wall already erected, so as to support the box in this elevated position. When the circuit has been completed the second time, the annual prunings of the vine are laid across the top of the earthen wall, and made fast in their places with stones or mud, in order to preserve it from the action of the rain, and to render more difficult the intrusion of the lighter animals. The inclosure being complete, the ground is not plowed but dug, a process which has to be

* Lev. xxv., 4, 5, 11.

† Matt. xxi., 33.

‡ Psa. lxxx., 12, 13. Isa. v., 4-6.

renewed yearly in the spring. The instrument used for this purpose is the same as that employed in digging gardens; it is a sort of spade whose handle is six feet long, and the blade triangular, with the most prominent point downward, and sharp on the two sides. A little above the blade is fastened a piece of wood upon which the foot is set in driving it into the soil.



Oriental Spade and
Roman Bepali-
um. (Isa. v., 6.)

The long handle gives a purchase, which enables the workman to lift up a large spadeful of earth, throw it forward, and break it up with a slanting stroke of his sharp, heavy hoe. This tool is similar to the bepalium of the Romans. It is customary for the men to work standing together in line, either for the purpose of emulation or that the strong men may assist the weak. This manner of digging is more thorough than what could be performed by an Eastern plow, and does less injury to the delicate roots of the vines. It takes a considerable number of workmen to dig over an entire vineyard, and this constitutes the chief expense attending the cultivation of the vine. During the whole season when vineyards may be dug, the common workmen go very early in the morning to the *Sook*, or market-place of the village or city, where comestibles are sold. While "waiting to be hired," they take their morning cup of coffee and eat a morsel of bread. The owners of vineyards come to the place and engage the number of laborers they need. These immediately go to the vineyard and work there until a little while before the sun sets, which, according to Oriental time, is twelve o'clock, so that "the eleventh hour" means one hour before sunset. We have often seen men stand in the market-place through the entire day without finding employment, and have repeatedly engaged them ourselves at noon for half a day's job, and later for one or two hours' work in our garden. In such a case the price has to be particularly bargained for, but it is more often left to the generosity of the employer to give whatever *bakshish* he feels disposed.*

When about to plant a vineyard, the husbandman selects

* Matt. xx., 1-15.

and cuts the most promising branches of one year's growth of the variety best suited to his purpose. These he soaks for a number of days in spring water, until the buds begin to burst forth, when he plants them in rows some eight feet apart. The stems are generally not allowed to grow up higher than two feet, though in some places they are six feet high. The branches are pruned every spring, being cut close to the stem, and, when not needed to thatch the top of the earth-wall, are burned to put them out of the way, as they are too porous and light to serve any purpose.* Among the poor, dry vine-branches are used for heating the water for washing; and in the neighborhood of large towns they are made into charcoal, which does not give out heat enough for cooking purposes, but is used in the houses of the wealthy to heat the *tandoor*, a warming apparatus described elsewhere.

Besides the general pruning, however, as soon as the fresh branches have come out upon the stems, and show their young blossoms, the vine-dresser goes from one stem to another, cutting off the branches which bear leaves only, in order to afford more nourishment for those which give promise of fruit, and not sparing altogether even these last.†

In many instances vineyards are attached to the houses of a city or village, and are greatly prized as being accessible and enjoyable at all seasons of the year.‡ They are, however, generally situated at a short distance from the town, and each of them contains a "cottage," to which the family resort in the spring, at the time of the digging of the vineyards, and later at the time of vintage, except where it is customary to remain through the season in these summer-houses.§ These vineyards are generally planted side by side, a hedge or wall separating one from another.

Besides the principal thoroughfares which pass through them, there are narrower paths or lanes less frequented, because they lead to fewer vineyards, and many of these are shaded by trees. In the hilly country in Palestine, however, the paths among the vineyards being beds of torrents, which carry the rain-water to a lower level, have become channels worn deeper than the

* John xv., 6; Ezek. xv., 2-4.

† 1 Kings xxi., 1.

† John xv., 1, 2.

§ Amos iii., 15.

adjoining ground; and when the tops of their boundary walls are thickly set with the cactus or other shrubs and trees, a shaded lane is produced which the passing traveler prefers to the wider thoroughfare. We have seen many of these lanes so narrow that two mounted travelers meeting in them could not pass each other, nor even turn round, and one must needs recede with his animal till he finds some side opening.*

As may be surmised, such places are favorable to deeds of blood and rapine, which are apt to occur during the summer season, for which reason the inhabitants generally remove to their vineyards, and return thence simultaneously for the sake of mutual protection.†

The summer-houses in the vineyards are properly denominated "cottages," for they are smaller than the more permanent residences, or "winter-houses," and more slightly built. They usually consist of a single room, but sometimes have a smaller apartment above, with a veranda in front. When the families remove thither, they carry only such furniture as they consider absolutely necessary, which is taken back to town after the vintage, the house remaining completely empty, the very doors and shutters being left open, or being removed to avoid robbery. As there is then in the vineyard nothing to attract either man or beast, the very gate is unfastened, and the accidental breaches in the wall or hedge are left to be repaired in the spring. It sometimes even happens that wild animals seek a refuge in the abandoned house, so that the forsaken vineyard, with its isolated "cottage," open through the winter to all comers, is an apt picture of desolation.‡

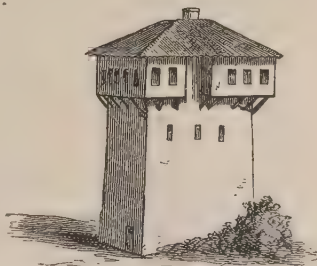
When a vineyard is large, however, and especially when it is situated in a lonely district, the structure to be occupied by the proprietor is often of a more solid character. There is no doubt that towers of solid masonry were formerly erected in such cases. We have frequently seen in Western Asia, and on some of the islands of the Archipelago, structures of a similar character, which were suggestive to us of the political condition of former days. They consist of a square building of solid masonry, rising to the height of forty feet, on the top of which is a story containing several apartments, well supplied

* Numb. xxii., 23-27.

† Judg. xxi., 19-23.

‡ Isa. i., 8.

with windows, whose elevated position makes it the recipient of every breeze, and an excellent post of observation. The lower portion of this building has a small solid door, and a few narrow windows at a considerable height from the ground. It contains, among other things, a stable and a wine-press. These buildings are old, and their style quite out of date.* They are called by the Greeks *pyrgos*, the very word used by our Saviour in Matt. xxi., 33; Mark xii., 1. The Septuagint uses the same term in Isa. v., 2. The Turks denominate them *koolah*, which means a country house, but is derived from *kaleh*, a tower or castle. They have another word for country or pleasure houses, when these are not in an isolated position, *i. e.*, *yali*. The word *πύργος*, *tower*, is also used in Luke xiv., 28, in such a connection as to indicate an expensive building like the *koolah*, rather than a slight structure.



Pyrgos, koolah, or Tower in the Vineyard. (Isa. v., 2.)

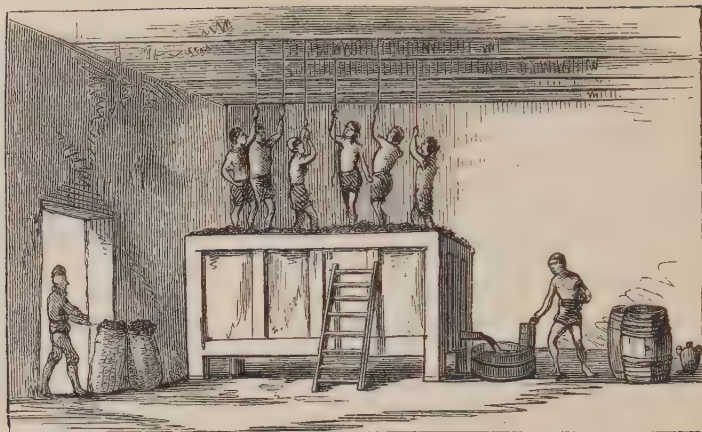
Some of the passages above mentioned speak also of a wine-press dug† out of the rock, probably outside of the town. We are not aware that such wine-presses are made at the present day, though they are often constructed of masonry; but many ancient ones are still in use. We must bear in mind that the ancients hewed buildings, temples, and sepulchres out of the solid rock, as abundant remains fully testify. In the construction of their wine-presses, advantage was taken of a favorable form of the rock, usually limestone, in order to hew an oblong or square excavation in the form of a shallow tank, with a hole in one side near the bottom, through which the grape-juice ran into a smaller basin. It was in such a press, doubtless, that Gideon threshed his wheat in order to conceal it from the marauding Midianites.‡

The wine-press now used in Western Asia, however, is either built of masonry or of wood. In the latter case it is a box six feet by ten, and four feet in depth, and set up several feet above the ground. It has a hole in the centre of one side, where a

* Thevenot, Part I., 99.

† Or hewn, Hebrew.

‡ Judg. vi., 11.



Modern Wine-press. (Hos. ix., 2,)

large vessel or trough is placed to receive the grape-juice. This box is set in the corner of the basement, and from the ceiling above hang cords for the support of the men, while a ladder resting against the side of the press enables them to climb into it. The ancient Egyptians used the same kind of wine-press.*



Ancient Egyptian Wine-press.

The only difference appears to consist in this, that the Egyptians set up theirs out-of-doors, building a slight roof over it to protect the grapes from the influence of the sun. Every thing

* Wilkinson, i., 46.

in this picture reminds one of the modern press, excepting the capitals of the pillars; for through all Asia Minor the principal timbers of wooden houses are laid upon large pebbles, as in this sculpture. The skull-cap now worn by the poor in Egypt is also, as here, often represented in the ancient monuments.

Instead of a "cottage" or "tower" in a vineyard, there is sometimes a high booth or rude structure, such as we have described in speaking of the melon-fields, page 109.* From this, as from the top of the tower, or from the flat roof of the cottage, the proprietor is obliged to watch over his fruit as soon as it begins to ripen, in order to preserve it from the inroads of the four-footed beasts, which have a relish for it. These, in the vicinity of the sea-shore, are chiefly jackals, an animal more homely, but no less keen-scented or cunning than the fox, which replaces it in the interior.† These creatures are very sly, and come only in the night. What Europeans have sometimes taken to be "scare-crows," consisting of the skeleton of a horse's head stuck upon the end of a pole, are not intended as such, but are merely used to keep off the "evil eye;" the "scare-fox" consists of a string tied between two poles, with bits of tin hung upon it which jingle in the wind. A more effectual scare, however, is a common iron trap laid before the hole in the hedge or wall through which they are wont to pass.

As the grapes are ripening, a double watch has to be kept. Men go about through the night striking upon vessels of tin or brass, or firing guns in the air. Boars and bears are more disagreeable customers, and are generally avoided: they are confined, however, to the neighborhood of the mountains.‡

The vintage is always a season both of activity and rejoicing.§ When the grapes are fully ripe, men, women, and children being hired for the purpose by the wealthy—while the poor help one another—turn into the vineyards and gather them in baskets, which the men carry to the wine-press, if near by, but if at some distance, put them in deep and narrow wicker-baskets and load them on mules and asses. From this circumstance arose the expression so often used by Moses in addressing the children of Israel, "thy basket and thy store;" for

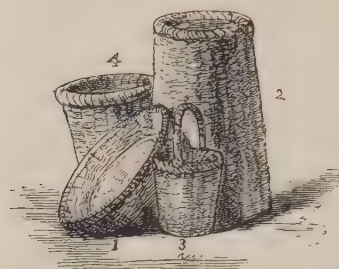
* Job xxvii., 18.

† Psa. lxxx., 13.

‡ Cant. ii., 15.

§ Isa. xvi., 10.

not only are grapes gathered in baskets, both for the vintage and for the use of the family, but olives and all manner of fruit and garden vegetables are collected in the same way.*



Oriental Baskets. (1. Gen. xl., 16; 2. Dent. xxviii., 5, 17; 3. Jer. vi., 9; xxiv., 2; 4. Acts ix., 25.)

The grapes are poured into the press, and as soon as it is sufficiently filled the treading begins. The men who engage in this work wash their limbs in water kept at hand for the purpose; they run up the ladder, spring upon the fruit, and, seizing the suspended ropes, begin vigorously the task of trampling. There is always great shouting and singing, probably produced

by the fumes of the new wine and the free libations in which, on these occasions, they are apt to indulge.† The expressed juice flows into the trough, whence it is transferred to other vessels with a dipper.‡ The words of Rev. xiv., 20, are elucidated by the expression, “the blood of grapes,” in Gen. xlix., 11.

The first juice which is drawn off from the grapes by their own weight as they lie in the press is considered the best, and is usually mixed with fine flour, boiled down to a thick paste, then cut into cakes, and dried in the sun. It is sometimes flavored with rose-water or cinnamon. Almonds or walnuts are also strung and dipped in the hot, soft paste, exactly as candles are made, and when sufficiently coated over they are hung in the sun to dry. But the grape-juice is almost exclusively employed, especially by the Muslims, who are forbidden the use of wine by the Koran, in making *dibs*, as the Arabs call it, which is a very palatable sirup obtained by boiling down the grape-juice. This is not only eaten with bread,§ but enters into the confection of a great variety of dishes, and takes the place of sugar, an article almost unknown except on the sea-board. This sirup was much used by the ancients.¶ It was mixed by them, as now, with milk and other articles of food. In Gen. xliii., 11; Psal. lxxxvi., 16; Ezek. xxvii., 17, the word

* Dent. xxviii., 5, 17.

† Jer. xxv., 30; xlviii., 33.

‡ Neh. xiii., 15; Job xxiv., 11; Isa. xvi., 10; Rev. xiv., 20; xix., 15.

§ Pococke, i., 58.

¶ Pliny, xiv., 11.

debesh does not indicate the ordinary bee honey, but grape sirup, and is the modern *dibs*. It is probable that the proper rendering of the expression, "A land flowing with milk and honey,"* would be, a land flowing with *leben*† and *dibz*.‡ The words are equivalent to "a land abounding in flocks, and thickly planted with fruitful vineyards."

Wine is not so extensively manufactured now in Western Asia as it was in ancient times, since the Christians who make and use it constitute but a small part of the population. It is probably for this reason that the quality is generally inferior. The success, however, which individuals have met with in manufacturing wine of superior quality, proves that the grapes have not deteriorated in this respect; and the wines of particular districts, such as Lebanon, Cyprus, Samos, Tenedos, and the Muscatel of Smyrna, are as celebrated as in ancient times.§

In making wine the grape-juice is poured into large vessels, or into jars half buried in the earth in a cool part of the premises. A little lime is thrown in, which is supposed to control the process of fermentation, and to prevent its turning to vinegar. This seems particularly necessary with the lighter wines. Wine is not generally used until after its fermentation is completed; in many parts of the country, however, it is put up in the skins of animals, chiefly goats, which are translated "bottles" in our version. The manner in which these bottles are prepared is as follows: As soon as the animal is killed an opening is made in the skin large enough to introduce the lips, and a man begins to blow between the skin and the flesh, until the two are completely separated from each other throughout. The head and feet are then cut off, and the entire body of the animal is drawn out of its skin through the opening at the neck. The hair is sometimes partially removed, and the skin tanned. In Persia the skins are saturated with pitch. The opening at the neck is used for filling and emptying the vessel, while the four feet are tied or sewed up. The grape-juice which is to undergo the process of fermentation is put into skins, which are either entirely new or which have been carefully examined and found able to withstand the pressure.||

* Exod. iii., 8, etc.

† Sour milk, the only form in which milk is drunk.

‡ Grape sirup.

§ Ezek. xxvii., 18; Hos. xiv., 7.

|| Job xxxii., 19; Matt. ix., 17; Mark ii., 22; Luke v., 37, 38.

These skin bottles have been used in the East from time immemorial, and are still employed throughout the country as far as Persia, also in Northern Africa, and even in Spain—a relic, doubtless, of the Moors.

Instead of making wine of the grape-juice as formerly, great quantities of grapes are yearly consumed in the distillation of *arrack*, or *rak-ée*, a strong spirit, frequently flavored with gum mastic, and extensively used by Mohammedans, whose Koran does not forbid this liquor, which was unknown in the days of their Prophet.

The ancients sought to increase the strength of their potations by a mixture of spices with their wine; and so likewise do modern Orientals.* But to our country seems unfortunately to belong the unenviable notoriety of making and using drugged wines, if that may be called wine which often possesses not a particle of the juice of the grape!

Most of the drunkenness of the East is produced by the use of *arrack*, wine being generally taken in connection with meals† and often mixed with water.‡ Arrack has been substituted for wine in some parts at marriage feasts, and all the guests are expected to drink at least to the health of the bride and the bridegroom.§

It would seem by the foregoing statements relating to the various uses of the grape, that the vine is one of the most valuable productions of Western Asia. Many a family possesses nothing in the world besides a vineyard and a small dwelling in the adjacent village or town, and this is their means of subsistence. All, even the poorest inhabitants of districts where the vine abounds, have a vineyard of greater or less extent, which supplies both the necessities and what they deem the luxuries of life, and enables them to withdraw for a time from the less healthful atmosphere of the village or town. The vineyards in many localities, moreover, contain a large number of fruit-bearing trees, such as the climate favors—the cherry, apple, pear, apricot, fig, and various nut-trees, from the tall shady walnut to the diminutive filbert. These fruits all add to the store of the household, being suspended in bunches from

* Psa. lxxv., 8; Prov. xxiii., 30; Cant. viii., 2.

† Matt. xxvi., 26, 27.

‡ Prov. ix., 2, 5. “Mingled” here has the force of diluted.

§ John ii., 2, 3, 10.

the ceilings, or ranged upon shelves running around their rooms, for winter provision, while the nuts are put up in bags till quite dry, then packed in jars. We have been informed by the proprietors of vineyards of about eight acres in extent, producing the finest quality of raisins, that they netted one thousand dollars a year, although the expenses were extremely high.

Vineyards are, however, often let out to husbandmen either for one or several years.* The price or hire is always paid in kind, and amounts to one-half the produce of the vineyard.† This is the universal system of farming out vineyards, gardens, and fields throughout Western Asia, and Churchill describes it as particularly prevalent on Mount Lebanon.‡ We have, however, personally known many cases in which the hire was paid in money.§

We should not omit to mention that the same custom prevails in Turkey at the present time as existed anciently among the Hebrews, namely, that a stranger may "eat his fill" of the fruit of a vineyard or orchard, but may not carry any away.||

It must not be supposed, from the foregoing account of the labor required by a vineyard, that the process resembles that of sowing seed and reaping the harvest; on the contrary, there is no occupation that makes more unceasing demands upon the time and attention of the husbandman. Remarking one day to the wife of one of this industrious and laborious class that her husband was scarcely ever at home, but always reported to be "at the vineyard," she replied: "The vineyard is like a baby; it needs constant tending, if one would reap any benefit."¶

After the crop has all been removed, the cattle and beasts of burden, and oftentimes whole flocks of sheep and goats, are let into the vineyard to browse upon the leaves and the weeds which spring up with the early rains of autumn.** Should these animals come in at any other time than this or the winter season, they would do as much harm as though let into a field of grain.††

We now turn to the preparation and uses of the oil. The

* Matt. xxi., 33.

† Churchill's "Mt. Lebanon," vol. i., p. 36.

‡ Deut. xxiii., 24.

** Wilkinson, i., 45.

† Matt. xxi., 34, 41.

§ Cant. viii., 12.

¶ Prov. xxiv., 30, 31.

†† Jer. xii., 10.

people occupying the countries around the Mediterranean depend in a great measure for their comfort and livelihood upon the produce of the olive-tree, whose utility is quite as great as that of the vine. This tree has been from time immemorial so abundantly cultivated in those lands that, for aught we know, it is indigenous to them all. At any rate, their soil and climate must be highly favorable to its cultivation. In Western Asia it is never found at a great distance from the sea, nor at a higher elevation than two thousand feet; for it exists nowhere on the plateau of Asia Minor, which is two thousand feet high in its lowest part, but abounds on the lower ground which lies between the plateau and the sea. On Mount Hermon, however, the olive-tree is found at an elevation of three thousand feet, and it flourishes in Mesopotamia and some of the valleys of Koordistan.*

This tree is not sowed: it grows spontaneously among the bushes which cover extensive portions of the country, having doubtless sprung up from seeds dropped by the birds; and when a clearing is made by cutting down and uprooting the bushes for the purpose of cultivation, the wild olive-trees are left standing where found, and are grafted by the husbandman. They, however, are sometimes removed thence to olive-yards or orchards, where they are planted in rows. These plantations are often very extensive. The trees that give its name to the Mount of Olives are scattered sparsely over a great part of that memorable height, and a large portion of the lowlands near the shores of Palestine, from Beirut to Sidon and in the neighborhood of Jaffa, is covered with olive-groves; indeed Palestine, both in ancient and modern times, has not only been able to supply its own wants, but has also exported its olive-oil to neighboring countries.† Moses truly described it to the Israelites as “a land of oil olive.”‡

Where the trees are planted, as they usually are in these groves, so close as just not to interfere with one another's growth, the ground on which they stand is simply plowed once a year; but it is frequently sowed with wheat or barley when the trees are farther apart.

The olive-tree is of so enduring a character, and its produce

* Fletcher, 103.

† Ezek. xxvii., 17; Hos. xii., 1.

‡ Deut. viii., 8.

is so valuable, that it is held as property separately from the field in which it grows, so much alone of the ground belonging to the owner of the tree as is needed for digging; for it is essential to the abundance of the crop that the soil be annually dug around the roots in order to admit the moisture of the winter rains. Such digging may, however, be neglected for many years without essentially injuring the tree, the only effect being a diminution of the crop for the time being. We have repeatedly seen title-deeds expressed in a form somewhat like the following: "Mohammed declares that he has sold to Ali his thirty-two olive-trees which stand in the field of Osman," etc. A field not unfrequently contains olive-trees which belong to several different persons.

This appears to be a very old custom, for we meet with it in the narrative of the purchase by Abraham of the field of Machpelah, with its cave, from Ephron the Hittite; we find therein the notable specification that every tree in that field, even to the very edge of it, became Abraham's property.* These trees were perhaps chiefly olive or other fruit trees, about whose distinct ownership Orientals are very particular. But it also shows that, as now, the principle of distinct ownership was admitted.

The "wild olive-tree" has a small dry berry, and must be grafted before it is useful to man. Among the grafted olives, however, there are differences, marked by the name of the district in which each variety is produced in the highest perfection. The process of grafting is referred to in one of the most interesting passages in the writings of St. Paul.† Some commentators, ignorant of the cultivation of the olive, have supposed that the process of grafting was inverted in the case of this tree, so that, instead of grafting a branch of the good upon the wild stock, a branch of the latter was grafted upon the good stock. St. Paul distinctly disavows such a supposition, for he declares that the grafting of the Gentiles upon the Church of God was "against nature." Indeed the olive-tree grows to so great an age, that the old wild root sometimes conquers the better graft, so that the fruit deteriorates and the tree must needs be grafted anew.

* Gen. xxiii., 17, 18.

† Rom. xi., 17-24.

In appearance this tree is unlike any other. Its trunk is gnarled and uneven, and grows more knotty and stout with age. It is not deciduous; its leaf is small, elliptical, and of a dark dull green on the upper side, while underneath it is of a pale gray, almost white.

When the tree has attained its perfect growth, it equals in height a common apple-tree; but its form is so regular, and its lower branches spread out in so complete and graceful a circle, that it possesses a beauty all its own, unchanged by the seasons of the year, and enhanced by the knowledge of its unsurpassed utility to man.* The psalmist compares children to olive-plants round about the table, because there they are seen collectively, and their merry faces correspond to the beauty and the promised fruitfulness of young olive-trees.† The psalmist could not have had in view the *branches*, for they never grow into independent trees; nor the *shoots*, or *suckers*, which spring from the roots, for these are always cut away as injurious to the tree.

Time, however, brings about great changes even upon the long-lived olive-tree. The trunk becomes more knotty and massive, but its core dies away and leaves an empty opening within; the branches decay and fall to the ground; the outer portions of the trunk gradually fall away, until you often see but a strip of the old stock clinging tenaciously to life, and still nourishing a little branch or two, which to the last bears its contribution to the necessities of man. We do not suppose, however, that there are sufficient data to fix the age of the olive: all the old trees being decayed in the centre, it would be impossible to count the rings which indicate the annual increase of the tree, and by which alone its age could be known with any degree of certainty. We do not believe in the myth which identifies certain olive-trees now growing at the foot of Mount Olivet as having stood there in the time of our Lord's passion, for Josephus distinctly states that at the siege of Jerusalem by Titus the soldiers cut down every tree around the city, "for a distance of ninety furlongs,‡ in order to raise banks against its walls; and of all the pilgrims who have described their visits to Jerusalem during the last one thousand two hun-

* Jer. xi., 16; Hos. xiv., 6.

† Psa. cxxviii., 3.

‡ "Jewish War," bk. vi., ch. i., § 1.

dred years, the first to refer to olive-trees as marking the site of Gethsemane are Maundrell and Quaresmius, not more than three centuries ago, one of whom upholds while the other opposes the opinion of their great antiquity. It has been supposed by some that the name of Gethsemane indicated that it consisted of an olive-grove. This, however, we can not admit, for it is distinctly declared to have been a "garden,"* and



Aged Olive-trees.

though an olive-tree or two sometimes grow in such places, yet gardens are planted either with vegetables or fruit-trees, and always imply irrigation. The narrative implies that there was a small house or cottage on the premises, doubtless occupied by the gardener and his family.† This is always the case with a garden, but never with an olive-yard. The name Gethsemane, which signifies "an olive-press," does not necessarily indicate that there was such a press within—indeed, being

* John xviii., 1.

† Mark xiv., 51, 52.

a garden, this was not likely to be the case. It simply points to the fact that an olive-press stood near this house by the road-side, which gave the place its name.

The wood of the olive-tree is of a light reddish or yellowish hue. It is irregularly grained, and not heavy, though firm. It was used by the ancient Hebrews, as now, for ornamental carved work. The two cherubims within the oracle of Solomon's Temple that stood "each ten cubits high," were made of olive-wood, so also were the doors and the posts. "The carved figures" of cherubim and palm-trees, and open flowers "upon all the walls of the house round about, within and without," were probably of the same material, and this entire wood-work was overlaid with gold.* Various articles are now made of olive-wood at Jerusalem, and sold to travelers as curiosities.

The blossoms of this tree are small, white, and very numerous. They are easily shed, and a strong wind often strews the ground with them, presenting the appearance of frost. The crop of olives is frequently thus greatly diminished, or well-nigh destroyed.†

The fruit of the olive consists of an oval berry about an inch long, containing a seed or stone of considerable size. It is black when ripe, but is often picked green, and after soaking in brine is eaten thus or cooked with meat. The largest and first ripe olives fall of their own accord to the ground, and are preserved in brine or oil for eating.

Where there are extensive plantations of this tree, belonging, as is generally the case, to a number of proprietors, no picking is allowed, nor shaking of the trees, until the time appointed by the authorities, which occurs in November or December. The public crier goes forth and announces the day on which the *gathering in* is to commence. Men, women, and children then enter the olive-yards. Some climb into the trees and shake the boughs, while others stand below and beat off the fruit with long, slender poles.‡ The poor are often seen, after the gathering in of the crop, going from tree to tree and collecting the few olives that may have been left.§ A full crop is obtained only every other year, which some attribute to the

* 1 Kings vi., 23, 31-33.

† Isa. xxiv., 13.

‡ Job xv., 33.

§ Deut. xxiv., 20; Isa. xvii., 6.

injury the trees receive by beating and shaking. The produce is quite remunerative, for a large tree in a good season yields ten to fifteen gallons of oil, and an acre planted with olive-trees in good condition bears a crop worth, in Palestine, £20 sterling, or \$100. All the fruit, however, is not converted into oil. The finest berries are usually put up for family use or sent to market, and many a laborer goes to his work in the morning carrying for his noon meal a few olives rolled between thin sheets of bread.

The olive-press is to be seen in all the villages and towns in whose vicinity this tree is cultivated. It stands in the square of the village, or by the roadside, or where several ways meet.

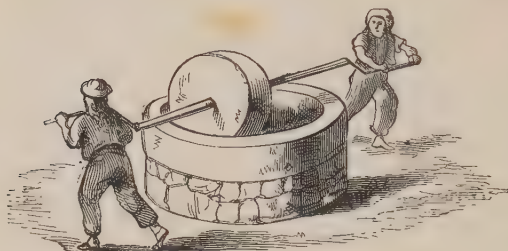


Ancient Olive-press. (Deut. xxxii., 13.)

This machine was formerly, like the wine-press, hewn out of the solid rock. Several are yet to be seen in a good state of preservation at a ruin above Tyre, near Kanah, where the olive must have been successfully cultivated more than twenty centuries ago, but has now disappeared from the surrounding region.* The modern olive-presses are made partly of masonry, and are essentially of the same form as the ancient. A circular stone, some six feet in diameter, and one foot in thickness, is dug out, somewhat in the shape of a pan. A hole is made at one side for the escape of the oil into vessels placed to receive it. This large stone is set upon a foundation of masonry so that its rim stands three or three and a half feet from the ground. A stone roller, often a fragment of an ancient pillar,

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 71.

about three feet in length, and eighteen inches to three feet thick, is laid in this flat-bottomed basin, so that one end of it nearly touches the side. The roller is perforated from end to



Women working at the Olive-press.

end, and through the hole a stout stick is passed, which terminates at either extremity with a handle. The olives being collected in baskets are first salted, then brought

to the press, and poured into the stone basin. Two men or women now grasp the handles of the axis of the roller, and as they walk around the press the olives are crushed by the ever-revolving stone, until they are reduced to a pulp mingled with oil and olive seeds. This pours through the side opening, and is received in vessels, or is taken up from the basin itself with dippers and spoons. The pulp is then poured into a bag of coarse canvas or hair-cloth, hot water is added, the mouth is carefully sewed up, and the bag thus filled with crushed olives and water is laid in a trough or basin of smaller dimensions, where it is trodden with the bare feet of women and girls until the oil has entirely oozed or strained through and flowed into vessels waiting to receive it, leaving in the bags only the pulp, skins, and stones of the olives. In some places the crushed olives are put into small baskets, and these under a weighted beam, which crushes out the oil into a stone trough; and this process appears to have been known to the ancients.*

The form of the ancient oil-presses already mentioned is the same as just described, and indicates that the process of extracting the oil was identical with the modern. This process is alluded to in numerous passages in the Scriptures. It was prophesied of Asher, on the skirts of Mount Lebanon, where the olive-tree abounds to this day, that he should "dip his foot in oil,"† *i. e.*, that his land would abound in the olive, whose oil

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 523.

† Deut. xxxiii., 24.

he should obtain by treading with his feet.* The Hebrew word translated "honey" in the latter passage is *debesh*, which, as we have shown, corresponds to the Arabic *dibs*, meaning grape-juice sirup; so that the parallelism in this verse is complete. In stone presses are trodden the grapes and the olives, and the rock thus yields in the one case "oil," and in the other grape-juice, or "dibs."

The oil having been obtained in the manner above described, is put up in skin bottles, or stored in large, glazed earthen jars buried in the ground. Rows of such jars may be seen in several shops of the city of Pompeii impregnated with the oil they once contained. The visitor is forcibly reminded of the jars, identical in form, which stand precisely in the same manner in the shops of Eastern oil merchants.

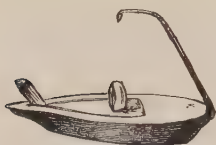
We have already spoken of the olive as an article of food. The oil derived from it is still more useful to large portions of the population of Western Asia, and may indeed be regarded as one of the indispensable necessities of life. In the higher regions of Asia Minor, where the olive-tree does not grow, the people make butter and use sheep's-tail fat for cooking purposes, and they burn pine-knots or tallow-candles; but even there substitutes for olive-oil are extensively used. In the region of Afion Kara Hissar an oil is extracted from the seed of the poppy, which the inhabitants have learned not to dislike as an article of food. The oil obtained from the little sesame-seed is often used in cooking in every part of Western Asia, but in Mesopotamia it is also burned instead of olive-oil, and was employed for anointing in the days of Strabo.† But olive-oil is imported even there, and is considered an article of luxury for which the rich willingly pay a high price, while in olive-growing regions it is considered so necessary a comfort as to be found in the poorest dwelling. As an article of food this oil is used in the preparation of a great variety of dishes and cakes, and is a general substitute for butter, which the heat of the climate renders difficult to keep. It was evidently so in Bible times. The widow of Sarepta, who received the prophet Elijah during a great famine, had nothing

* Deut. xxxii., 13; Job xxix., 6; Ezek. xxxii., 14.

† "Geography," bk. xvi., ch. xxi., § 20.

left in her house but "a handful of meal, and a little oil in a cruse."* The enumeration of the articles of food which Solomon was to furnish for the servants of Hiram, king of Tyre, while engaged in hewing and transporting cedar-trees and fir-trees for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, is an evidence that the chief food of the common workmen of those days, as now in similar localities, consisted of wheat flour and oil.†

But oil is also burned to give light, and is indeed the only article that is thus employed wherever it can easily be procured. Tin has now become so cheap that it is in very general use, being manufactured into lamps of various shapes, as well as lanterns with glass. The paper lanterns are lighted by a bit of candle inside. In ancient times lamps were made

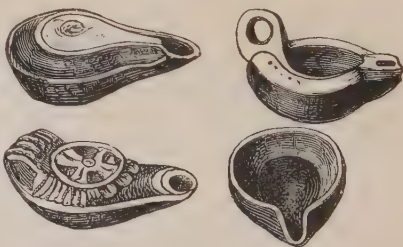


Modern Clay and Tin Lamps.

of earthenware, and the wealthy had them of brass, silver, and even of gold; of this last precious metal were made the candlesticks of the Temple, which were lighted with oil.‡ The poor alone still use lamps of earthenware. They are in the shape of a small plate or saucer, with the edge turned up at one side to hold the wick, and contain a spoonful of oil. Some are of tin, and have a cover. Similar ancient lamps are often found among ruins. One of the an-

nexed bears a Christian cross. They are often elegant in form and elaborate in design.

They are covered at the top, where there is a hole for pouring in the oil, while another at the side receives the wick; there is often a handle large enough to pass one finger through, for the purpose of holding it. These lamps are often adorned



Ancient Terra-cotta Lamps. (Matt. xxv., 1.)

with graceful designs of heathen deities or mythological subjects, of animals, and birds, and comic scenes. These were ev-

* 1 Kings xvii., 12; 2 Kings iv., 2.

† 1 Kings v., 11; Ezra. iii., 7.

‡ Exod. xxv., 31; xxvii., 20; 2 Chron. iv., 20.

idently hand-lamps, intended to be carried about the house; but when they were required to burn for a considerable time, they needed to be replenished, and a small earthen jar filled with oil was set near the lamp, as it now is, from which a new supply was added whenever the light grew dim. It was thus that in the admirable parable of the Ten Virgins, when the lamps had burned down with the long delay of the bridegroom, "the wise" virgins were able to replenish theirs, which "the foolish" could not do.*

This, however, was not the only kind of lamp used by the ancients. The forms still extant are extremely varied, both in model and in size, many of them being made to be permanently suspended from the wall or ceiling, and others to be set on tables, shelves, brackets, or even upon the floor. The finest collection of these vessels is to be seen in the Museum of Naples. They were taken from the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Brass candlesticks, and even such as are made of more costly materials, are now in use in Western Asia, and are set on brackets or upon the floor. The latter are often three or four feet high.†

The language of Job,‡ though metaphorical, expresses primarily the extreme poverty and distress to which such are reduced as are deprived of these comforts and necessities.

The use of oil in anointing the body appears to have been general in ancient times among all the nations dwelling around the Mediterranean. Allusions to this use abound in all ancient authors. The heroes of Homer are described by him as restoring their weary limbs after a battle by frictions of oil.§ This was Alexander's practice.|| It was Pompey's daily habit also, as well as that of all the wealthy Romans.¶ We find this custom alluded to in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments. It is mentioned as forming a habitual part of the toilet on special occasions**—not to be indulged in in case of mourning.†† The head was anointed in connection with the daily recurring ablution, as mentioned in Matt. vi., 17.

* Matt. xxv., 3, 4, 8, 9.

† Rev. ii., 1.

‡ Job xxi., 17; Prov. xx., 20.

§ "Iliad" x., 577.

|| See Plutarch, "Life of Alexander," § 30.

¶ Plutarch, "Life of Pompey," § 78.

** Ruth iii., 3; 2 Sam. xii., 20; Micah vi., 15.

†† 2 Sam. xiv., 2; Dan. x., 2, 3.

Egyptian monuments represent servants anointing guests on their arrival at their entertainer's house, and alabaster vases still exist which retain traces of the ointment they once contained.* This was adopted from the Egyptians by the Jews, and the settlement of many of these people at Alexandria served to maintain Egyptian customs among them.† This practice has disappeared in modern times, on account of the conquest of these lands by foreign nations. The hair is now anointed, but mostly by the women, since the men have the head shaved. The wrestlers, called by the Turks *Pekhliwans*, anoint themselves with oil before wrestling, as did the ancients preparatory to similar athletic exercises, in order to render their bodies more slippery under the grasp of their antagonists.‡ The custom of anointing the body is still prevalent among some nations of Africa. The Abyssinian gentleman places a lump of butter every morning on the top of his head, and covers it with his bushy locks; as it melts it flows over his body; and the Hottentots so besmear their bodies with grease as to leave traces of it wherever they sit.

Anointing with oil was a part of the ceremonial of the Jewish law, which has been introduced into the Roman as well as the Oriental churches. It is prepared by these according to the rule prescribed by Moses,§ and is with them no inconsiderable source of revenue. The "extreme unction" practiced by the Romish Church is defended by a misinterpretation of Jas. v., 14, for extreme unction is never applied until it is considered certain that the patient is about to die, whereas the words in James, as well as in Mark vi., 13, connect anointing the sick with recovery. We do not consider that in these cases oil was used either as a means or a symbol; the anointing was simply an exercise of faith similar to Peter and John's saying to the lame man at the gate of the Temple called Beautiful, "Rise up, and walk." The elders of the church, after praying for the sick man, were to treat him as though he were recovered. They were to help him rise from his bed, wash, anoint his head and dress, and rejoice with him in view of the healing mercies of God.

* See Wilkinson, "Ancient Egypt," i., 78, pl. 89.

† Psa. xxiii., 5; Amos vi., 6; Luke vii., 46.

‡ Josephus, "Antiquities," xv., 8, § 1; xii., 5, § 1. § Exod. xxx., 23, 24, 25.

With the Jews likewise, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with sacred oil.* This custom is also practiced in modern times in the coronation of Christian sovereigns.

The first mention made of the olive-tree in the Scriptures represents the dove which Noah let out of the ark, returning to him in the evening, bringing an olive-leaf in its mouth.† The dove and the olive have ever since been by many nations considered emblems of peace. It is difficult to say how far this may have been produced by the traditional remembrance of the deluge, which has always been preserved among the tribes of Western Asia and South-eastern Europe; certainly the dove is the most harmless of birds, and the valuable fruits of the olive-tree greatly suffer from the prevalence of war, which always seeks to destroy this source of wealth. In the late insurrection in the island of Crete, the Turks are said to have cut down and destroyed no less than three hundred thousand olive-trees.

The incident to which we have alluded in the narrative of the deluge, *i. e.*, that “the dove plucked an olive-leaf,” indicates an important circumstance with regard to that event. It shows that the deluge was not a fearful cataclysm, as some would have us believe, produced perhaps by a change of the poles of the earth, melting the glaciers of the northern regions. Such an event would have destroyed all vegetation. Noah’s ship would have been wrecked by it and shattered in pieces, mountains would have been torn from their foundations, and the traces of the catastrophe would have been visible to the end of time. Not so, however, with the Mosaic narration. The waters gradually rose, and still more gradually diminished and receded until they were “dried up.” The great floating house, with its living freight, was slowly lifted up and gently let down again, on one of the slopes of Ararat. The olive-trees and all the trees of the field emerged from the flood untorn by any rapid devastating current. A wicked race alone had perished by drowning, and mankind were to begin life over again. The olive is still found in the deep valleys among the mountains of Koordistan and Armenia, the probable cradle of the human race.‡

* Lev. viii., 12; 1 Sam. xvi., 13; 1 Kings xix., 16.

† Gen. viii., 11.

‡ Layard, “Nineveh,” i., 138, 198; Tavernier, 26; Ussher, 408; Fletcher, 103.

CHAPTER VI.

FRUIT AND FOREST TREES, WITH THE FLOWERS OF BIBLE LANDS.

IN describing the chief fruit-bearing trees of Bible lands, and particularly those which are spoken of in the Scriptures, we shall begin with such as grow nearest to the habitations of men, in the gardens and cultivated fields, whether they need artificial watering and special care, or require no particular attention.

The fig-tree is one of the most important fruit-trees of Western Asia. It grows spontaneously from the ground wherever its seed happens to fall, but its fruit is worthless until grafted. The young tree is set in some favorite spot of the garden, and often indeed planted in a cluster, or circle, making, with its wide-spread branches, a most agreeable shady arbor. The tree being very long-lived, and the main branches generally dividing close to the ground, they are often borne down by age, and with the shoots growing up from the roots form a natural bower. They are also planted in vineyards,* or orchards, in regular rows. In such a case the ground is dug around every tree in the early spring, in order to increase its fruitfulness, and sometimes the entire surface of the orchard is dug or plowed. This is not usually done to the fig-trees of a garden or vineyard, unless their fruitfulness seems impaired, when they are "dug about," and the soil is enriched, to restore their usefulness; for, as has already been stated, Orientals, as a general rule, preserve and care for fruit-bearing trees alone, every other being cut down for fuel.†

The leaves of the fig-tree surpass in size those of every other tree in Western Asia,‡ and are often made into frail baskets by sewing or pinning them together with slender twigs or thorns, for the purpose of carrying light fruit, such as the mulberry. The tree affords a thick shade, and is, on this account,

* Luke xiii., 6.

† Luke xiii., 7-9.

‡ Gen. iii., 7.

a favorite resort of the family, where they may often be seen seated on mats, partaking of a meal or entertaining friends. Underneath its grateful shade many a refreshing nap is taken in the heat of the day, for it is supposed to exert a healthy influence upon the sleeper, while that of the walnut is considered deleterious. The expression "to sit under one's own vine and fig-tree" denotes at once security, domestic enjoyment, and competence.* The blossom of the fig-tree is precisely similar in appearance to a small fig, and drops off, leaving a seed-vessel, which develops into the fruit. These blossoms appear in the month of March, while the leaves are yet growing; but the earliest fruit does not ripen till July, and some even later.

There are several varieties of figs. Some are eaten fresh, which have a green color outside and are red within. Others are mostly used in a dried state. These are of a larger size, of a green or purple color without, and paler within, as well as sweeter to the taste. They are left to dry upon the tree, and when gathered and washed in sea-water, or brine, are laid up in bags and pressed into cakes as provisions for the house. Although figs are produced and dried for home consumption in all the countries bordering upon the Mediterranean, yet the dry figs of commerce are produced exclusively in a single district of Western Asia Minor. It is the valley of the Meander, in the neighborhood of Aïdin-Guzel-Hissar, the ancient Tralles. This beautiful and fertile plain abounds in extensive plantations of fig-trees, the delicacy and lusciousness of whose fruit is unsurpassed. The figs are left to dry upon the tree, and are gathered as fast as they fall or are shaken off by the wind. They are collected in bags, which are sent off to the port of Smyrna, a distance of eighty miles, on camels, and there the price of every bag is set.

The process of curing consists in washing the fruit in sea-water, after which it is sorted and packed in boxes, or "drums." While the fig is on the tree, it is, like the fruit of the sycamore, punctured near its base by an insect which deposits an egg, whence issues a grub, or worm, which usually makes its appearance after the fruit has been shipped for exportation, to

* 1 Kings iv., 25; Mic. iv., 4.

the great discomfort of all on board. It is believed that the dried fig is not fit to eat until it has thus been first tasted by this "ugly customer." The curing of the fruit with salt-water generally causes some of the saccharine matter it contains to come out upon the surface in the form of finely-powdered sugar: this has led the consignees in foreign ports to suppose that the fruit was packed with a sprinkling of sugar, and they have been known repeatedly to write to the Smyrna merchants to "use less sugar in packing the figs."

The season for preparing this fruit for the market is eagerly anticipated by the poor as the most hopeful period for obtaining the means of subsistence, great numbers of women and even children being then able to find employment in the extensive mercantile warehouses. The throngs which thus annually gather to Smyrna in "the fig season" from all the neighboring villages and islands have bestowed upon the capital of Ionia the title of "Mother of the Poor."

Dried figs are often carried on journeys, for they keep well, are wholesome, and slightly medicinal.* A dried fig is used as a very effectual poultice upon boils.† The boil of Hezekiah was doubtless of a malignant character, being either a carbuncle or a boil in the armpit, which constitutes the well-known "plague of Egypt," which was for so many centuries and until lately the scourge of the Levant. Hezekiah's cure was not effected by the "lump of figs," a remedy doubtless well known to the king's physicians; but the prophet ordered it to be treated as a common boil, with the assurance that it would prove as harmless.

There is a passage in the New Testament which has ever been a still greater stumbling-block to interpreters, one which has given birth to hypotheses almost innumerable. We refer to the account of the cursing of the fig-tree by our Lord, and to its withering soon after.‡ Most interpretations do injustice to the character of our Lord, or misrepresent the nature of the tree. Among the latter, the most extraordinary statement is that of a very respectable authority, who affirms that it was customary to plant fig-trees by the roadside because it was

* 1 Sam. xxv., 18; xxxi., 12; 1 Chron. xi., 40.

† 2 Kings xx., 7; Isa. xxxviii., 21.

‡ Matt. xxi., 18-22; Mark xi., 12-14, 20-23.

thought that the dust, by absorbing the excessive sap, increased the productiveness of the tree! Others have asserted that, as this particular tree grew by the roadside, it could not have any particular owner, so that the withering of it could injure no one. Such are not aware that in Western Asia every fruit-bearing tree, wherever it stands, has an owner, who is often not the proprietor of the soil whereon it grows, no more than the owner of a house-lot is necessarily the proprietor of the house built upon it. Other commentators maintain that this tree was wild, not knowing probably that the fruit of such can not be eaten. Others, again, state that there was an early crop, imagining that the tree yields two crops annually, and probably mistaking the fig-like blossoms of March* for the ripe fruit of a much later period, and overlooking the fact that the evangelist distinctly states that "the time of figs was not yet." Some of these views can not escape the imputation of representing our Lord as ignorant of some natural facts which were familiarly known to his disciples and the people among whom he lived. They even give us a picture of this incident which implies a movement of passion or disappointment, which led our Saviour to the performance of a miracle for the punishment of a senseless tree, totally at variance with the beneficent character of his other "wonderful works."

In presenting an interpretation of this difficult passage which may not lie open to the foregoing objections, by harmonizing at once with the character of our Lord and with all the facts in the case, we would suggest that it is but a fragmentary account, which can not be fully understood without allowing the imagination to fill up the existing chasms with the probable circumstances which have been omitted in the narrative. These might be supplied somewhat as follows: On the path which leads from Bethany, over the top of Olivet to Jerusalem, stood a fig-tree by the way-side. It was of the kind which is eaten green or fresh. Now it often happens that some of the fruit, being hidden by the leaves, is not picked, and it comes in sight when the leaves drop at the coming of winter. These figs become dry and dark, and when the fresh leaves come out in March they can easily be distinguished by their color. Al-

* Cant. ii., 13.

most every fig-tree has thus some fruit left upon its topmost branches until the ensuing season. They are indeed poor fare, even for the poorest; but our Lord belonged to the latter class. He had passed that way not long before, and had either seen them, or had plucked and eaten some of them. The owner of the tree may have been an enemy, or he may simply have been vexed by the sight of strangers who went "across lots" along the shorter path, instead of taking the high-road to Jericho, climbing on his trees and picking the old figs of last year, to the danger of injuring the young shoots and blossoms of the present crop. He cared not that Moses allowed them.* So he shook off and threw away the remaining figs. Our Lord's conduct on the occasion presents us an example of the mysterious union of the human and divine nature in one being. He looked into the tree for fruit as a man, and he understood all the circumstances of the case as God alone can. He punished the churlish owner in faithfulness to his soul, just as he had punished the Gadarenes for keeping unclean animals by letting the "legion of devils" go into the swine.† But the matter concerned not the apostles, and he told them nothing of it. For them there was only a lesson of faith. The knowledge of the punishment inflicted would have destroyed the effect of the warning they had already received upon that subject.‡

There is no evidence to prove that our Saviour intended to impress upon his hearers through this incident, as some have supposed, the dealings of God toward the Jews for bearing leaves alone without the fruits of righteousness.

No fruit-tree is more highly esteemed throughout the Levant than the pomegranate, whether for its beauty or its fruit. It is a shrub rather than a tree; and has a bright green and lustrous leaf. Its wood is fragile, and of a yellow tint. The trees are of two kinds; some producing blossoms alone, while others yield the delicious fruit. The flowers have beautiful petals of a bright scarlet color, encased in a bell-shaped calyx of a paler tint, stiff as leather, and with a regularly serrated border. The fruit is round like an orange, and terminated by the scalloped calyx. It is of a flesh color, with tints of deeper rose.§

* Deut. xxiv., 19-21.

† Luke ix., 54-56.

‡ Matt. viii., 32.

§ Cant. iv., 3.

The rind is thick, and of a bright yellow hue on the inside. The pomegranate is filled with a large number of closely-packed kernels, mostly consisting of a delicate juice, inclosing a small seed. These constitute its edible part, and are arranged in irregular groups attached to portions of the rind which project inwardly; they are separated from each other by a delicate membrane. The juice of this fruit is often manufactured into wine.* Gath-rimmon† signifies the “wine-press of the pomegranate,” and implies that the wine-presses of that town were used for the manufacture of pomegranate wine. One species of pomegranate has kernels of a deep crimson color, preferred by some on account of their strong acidity, their juice being sometimes used instead of vinegar. The other variety is nearly white, of a pleasant sweet flavor, very refreshing, and a great favorite with all classes. The pomegranate keeps for a long time, and is transported over considerable distances, chiefly for the use of the sick. The rind is employed for tanning purposes, and being a powerful astringent, is administered in cases of dysentery. These trees are often seen in gardens‡ by running water, but they are also grown in extensive orchards, where they can be irrigated, as at Narlikeuy, near Smyrna.§ They are widely cultivated not only in Palestine but throughout Syria, and the sea-board of Southern and Western Asia Minor. They are also found in Persia, on the mountains of Northern India, and on all the shores of the Mediterranean. This fruit was not unknown to the ancient Egyptians, for it is carved on some of their monuments, and the Israelites were familiar with it.|| It was extensively cultivated in Palestine during the entire Jewish history.¶ The “pomegranate-tree” under which Saul “tarried in Migron, near Gibeah,” was probably a cluster or grove of these trees on the top of the high and steep hill mentioned by Josephus,** where Israel’s king had gathered the remnant of his army.†† The villages or towns of Rimmon,‡‡ Gath-rimmon, and Enrimmon§§ doubtless derived their names from neighboring groves of pomegranate-trees.

* Cant. viii., 2.

† Josh. xxi., 25.

‡ Cant. vi., 11.

§ Cant. iv., 13.

|| Exod. xxviii., 33; Numb. xx., 5.

¶ Numb. xiii., 23; Deut. viii., 8.

** “Antiquities,” vi., 6, § 2.

†† 1 Sam. xiv., 2.

‡‡ Hebr. pomegranate, Josh. xv., 32.

§§ Neh. xi., 29.

The Hebrews adopted the pomegranate as a sacred emblem. It was carved on the capitals of the pillars in Solomon's Temple, and embroidered upon the priestly garments alternately with bells (its bell-shaped blossoms?)* It was doubtless a type not only of beauty, but of refreshing and of healing. The ancient heathen nations by whom the Israelites were surrounded made use of similar emblems. Among the Greeks and Romans the laurel, or oleander, was the favorite, a shrub which adorns the banks of the streams of Western Asia, and whose evergreen leaf and bright crimson blossom were easily woven into wreaths and crowns, the fit type of victory; it is now found carved upon the remains of their temples and monuments. Among the Egyptians the lotus flower, which grows amidst tranquil waters, celebrated for its delicious perfume, was the emblem of happiness and repose, and formed the capitals of the pillars which supported and adorned the buildings consecrated to religious purposes. It was in this way that the honeysuckle was very generally adopted as an architectural ornament among the Greeks: this may be simply owing to the gracefulness and fragrance of the flower; but it is singular to find it upon the most ancient sculptures of Nineveh, so represented as to indicate that it was one of the most sacred mystic emblems of that people.

The almond-tree is light and graceful, with a small and delicate leaf, and is very extensively grown, being planted in gardens and along the hedges of vineyards. It is the earliest tree to blossom, and was for that reason called by the Romans the "vigilant" or "watchful" tree, indicating its readiness to take advantage of the first mellowing of the season. Its numerous white blossoms burst forth in the month of January, before the leaf-buds appear; and being set off by the fresh grass of that season of the year, the almond-trees then present a snowy appearance, not unlike so many hoary heads scattered over the fertile valleys. Hence the simile of "the Preacher."† Almonds are of two kinds, the soft and the hard-shelled, a variety of the latter being bitter. The soft-shelled almond is produced only on some of the islands. This nut is highly esteemed, and forms a part of the provision of the household. The

* Exod. xxviii., 33, 34; 1 Kings vii., 18, 20.

† Eccles. xii., 7.

nuts mentioned in Cant. vi., 11, were probably the almond, walnut, filbert, and pistachio.* The latter is a grafted terebinth, and not very extensively cultivated, though highly esteemed; while the walnut is common and of great size; its fruit likewise is large and highly esteemed. A delicate oil is extracted from the almond, and this circumstance, together with its graceful form, doubtless led to its adoption as the model for the sacred golden candlestick† A representation of this candlestick may be seen in very good preservation, together with other spoils taken from the Jews, upon the Arch of Titus in Rome.

The camphire-tree, now called the henna, is a shrub highly esteemed throughout the East, and cultivated either singly or in rows. It is referred to only in Cant. iv., 13. Yet it is a plant of not a little importance, as illustrating some of the habits of Oriental society. A dye is made of its dried leaves, with which the women stain their hair, their finger-nails, and the palms of their hands; sometimes even the feet are dyed in the same manner, and indeed it constitutes an indispensable adornment of a bride. It is also used by the men, being applied to the hair and the beard, particularly of the aged. It is deemed highly ornamental when used to color the mane and tail of a white horse. This custom, so universal, is referred to by several authors of antiquity; and the fact that the nails of some of the Egyptian mummies (particularly those of females), still show traces of the dye upon them, is a sufficient evidence of the existence of that practice in the earliest times, and proves the durability of the dye. The blossoms of the henna are white, and grow in clusters. Their sweet perfume makes them special favorites with the women, who are fond of placing bunches of them in their bosoms.‡

We shall not describe the plantations of mulberries, nor the production of silk, now one of the principal resources of many districts of Western Asia, for this article was unknown to the ancients, except as imported from China, and its production in the Western world dates only from the twelfth century of our era.§ Silk is undoubtedly referred to only in Rev. xviii., 12.

* See also Gen. xliiii., 11.

† Cant. i., 13, 14.

† Exod. xxv., 33, 34; xxxvii., 19, 20.

§ Michaud, "Histoire des Croisades," iv., 299.

The only passage in the Old Testament where the word mulberry occurs in our version is considered by commentators as of doubtful correctness;* yet there is nothing in the narrative to exclude such a translation. Mulberries are of two kinds. That which yields the *black* berry is cultivated for its fruit alone, which is highly esteemed on account of its pleasant acidity; for its leaves are not given to the silk-worm. Its juice is blood-red, and it is mentioned in 1 Macc. vi., 34, that it was placed before the elephants of Antiochus, in order that the sight of what they would suppose to be blood might enrage and excite them to fight against the army of the Jews. It is this variety of mulberry which is referred to in the New Testament under the name of "sycamine,"† a purely Greek word still in common use. Though the white mulberry is sometimes eaten, it is deemed insipid. It is probable that the ancients, who were unacquainted with the manner of obtaining silk, planted the black mulberry almost exclusively for the sake of its fruit. The tree, moreover, grows to a larger size, and affords a thicker shade. It often occupies a favorite spot in a garden, or takes the place of a cluster of fig-trees in a vineyard, and is often chosen as a place of resort. The language of our Lord in the last-mentioned text would lead us to suppose that he had retired with his disciples to such a spot, when he told them that "had they faith as a grain of mustard-seed," *i. e.*, the smallest possible amount of it, they could command the mighty tree under which they were sitting, and it would rise from its place, in spite of its weight and roots, and would travel to and throw itself into the sea.

The tree which produces the white mulberry grows to a great size when not kept down by pruning for the purpose of feeding the silk-worms. It affords a dense and grateful shade in hot countries, but, as already mentioned, the fruit is insipid, though very sweet.

We shall also refrain from noticing the cultivation of cotton, one of the chief products of modern Egypt. The ancients were mostly clothed in woollen stuffs, as are, to a great extent, the inhabitants of the interior portions of the country at the present day; but the garments of the rich were made of fine

* 2 Sam. v., 23, 24; see also 1 Chron. xiv., 14, 15.

† Luke xvii., 6.

linen, often beautifully embroidered and dyed.* Flax is still produced in many parts of the country, though to a limited extent, for the cheap cotton fabrics of Europe have completely supplanted the manufacture of linen. Silk also is extensively worn by the rich of both sexes.

The sycamore is a tree which flourishes best in the dry and equable climate of Upper Egypt, where it attains its greatest size. The trunk, which not unfrequently measures fifty feet in circumference, is quite short, and the principal branches are broad, and extend horizontally to a great distance, covering an extensive area with their delightful shade. The leaves are heart-shaped, downy on the under side, and somewhat fragrant: a supposed resemblance to the mulberry-leaf has given it its name, which, in the Greek language, signifies the "fig-bearing mulberry."

The sycamore is deciduous; the fresh leaves come out in the month of March, but the old do not drop until replaced by the new. The fruit is of the shape and internal structure of a small fig, of a yellowish green or purple hue when ripe. It has a sweetish and slightly aromatic taste, is watery, and inferior in flavor to the common fig. Several crops are produced yearly, and the fruit grows, not on the smaller branches, as is the case with most other trees, but upon short leafless stems directly from the trunk and principal branches.

In the hot climate of Egypt, the shade of this tree is extremely grateful to the traveler, while the fruit, though somewhat insipid, is refreshing to his parched lips, and is for this reason often planted by the road-side.† The wood of the sycamore is light and porous, but in Egypt it is long-enduring. It is supposed that of this wood were made the coffins of the mummies which have lasted for thousands of years; though others think that the wood employed was the *Cordia myxa*, also used in the manufacture of most of their furniture.

This tree flourishes throughout Palestine, but is not found in the extreme north of Syria, where the occasional frosts would surely destroy it.‡ But its fruit has never been so highly esteemed as in Egypt; see Amos vii., 14, where the prophet

* Gen. xli., 42; Ezek. xxvii., 16; Rev. xviii., 16.

† Luke xix., 4, 5.

‡ Psa. lxxviii., 47.

calls himself "an herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit," indicating that he belonged to the lowest class of the people, who turned their hands to one and another of the most undesirable and unremunerative occupations, according to the season of the year and the opportunity offered. The sycamore is mostly planted in low, sandy, and sheltered situations, like the valley of the Jordan, and these trees were so numerous in the days of King David that he appointed a special overseer for them and the olive-trees.* They are easily planted, for a branch stuck into the ground and watered is sure to take root and grow into a fine tree. Thus they are planted by the roadside near a well or a spring, or where several ways meet.

When Zaccheus climbed into a sycamore-tree, he doubtless stood upon one of the lower horizontal branches extended over the road, and could see the whole multitude who accompanied our Saviour pass beneath him; a position which children, and even men and women, now take to get the best view of a similar crowd or procession.†

The language used in 1 Kings x., 27, indicates not only the abundance of the sycamore-trees, but also that there could be no comparison in the mind of the Israelite between the value of the cedar of Lebanon and the sycamore, for the cedar was the image of grandeur and glory, and its wood was not only enduring, but fragrant.‡ In the enumeration of the trees and plants described by Solomon, the cedar was placed at the head of the vegetable kingdom,§ and its wood was to be obtained only at great cost.

The date-palm is one of the most interesting trees mentioned in the Scriptures. It is indigenous, and succeeds best in the hot and dry climate of Upper Egypt, and in the peninsula of Arabia, but is also found in Palestine, around the shores of Syria and Asia Minor, and in the southern islands of the Mediterranean, particularly Cyprus, Rhodes, and Crete.|| The Phenice here mentioned appears to have derived its name, signifying a date-palm, from the trees which grew about it; at this high latitude, however, the tree bears no fruit, or it does not come to full maturity. The dates even of Palestine are not

* 1 Chron. xxvii., 28.

§ 1 Kings iv., 33.

† Luke xix., 4.

|| Acts xxvii., 12.

‡ Isa. ix., 10.

so highly esteemed as those of Upper Egypt. But when the Greeks and Romans had as yet little or no intercourse with the interior of Africa and Arabia, they saw this graceful tree growing upon the coast from Beirut to Jaffa, as it does to this day, and named the country Phœnicia—the *Land of the Palm*; so, when Vespasian conquered Jerusalem, he struck a coin representing a woman weeping, sitting under a palm-tree, with the inscription “Judea capta.”

The palm grows in its highest perfection amidst the very sands of the desert, where, however, it depends upon fresh spring water, which is indispensable to its existence. It is thus a fit emblem of the righteous living and prospering in a wicked world, sustained by enduring influences derived originally from the skies.* It is found in Upper and Central Egypt in extensive plantations, and is the principal tree of that region, the inhabitants greatly depending upon it for their subsistence.

This remarkable tree consists of a single stem or trunk, attaining the height of sixty or eighty feet without a branch, and crowned at the summit by a cluster or tuft of leaves, or “palms” that droop and shape themselves somewhat in the form of an umbrella. Each of these palms spreads out like a fan from a stem which is attached to the trunk; and these stems form a circle which marks the annual growth of the tree. In a wild state, the successive rows of palms wither and contract, but remain upon the trunk, producing with every breath of wind a strange creaking sound in the silence of the desert; in such a case the quantity and quality of the fruit are inferior. The natives, therefore, cut off these stems as fast as they dry, leaving but five or six circles of palms upon the top of the tree, which constitute its foliage. The trunk thus presents the appearance of scales, which enable a man to climb with ease to the top of the tree and gather the fruit.†

The dried palms, when cut off, are manufactured into baskets and mats, while the fibres of their stems are made into brooms. The date-palm is divided into staminate and pistillate;‡ and there is, again, another distinction made, according as the fruit, when ripe, is dark red, yellow, or white. It grows

* *Psa.* xcii., 12.

† *Cant.* vii., 8.

‡ *Herodotus*, bk. i., ch. 193.

in large clusters, or bunches, which hang from the trunk, near the root of the lowest green stems, presenting the appearance, with the fresh foliage above, of a graceful basket, through whose irregular openings the fruit hangs down, its amber tint in beautiful contrast with the dark, shining leaves above. The pistils of the date-blossom contain a fine and curly fibre, which is beaten out and used in all the Eastern baths for soaping the body. At the extremity of the trunk, and above the uppermost circle of palms, is a terminal bud, containing a whitish substance, resembling a fresh almond both in consistency and in taste, which the Arabs eat with the greatest relish whenever a date-tree is cut down, calling it "the heart of the tree."*

The wood of the palm, though light and porous, is much used in architecture. As the tree puts forth a new set, or circle, of palms every year, it affords a reliable source of information as to its own age; thus trees have repeatedly been ascertained to be of several centuries' growth. The date, whose name is derived from the Greek word δάκτυλος, signifying *a finger*, from its resemblance to a finger-end, is about an inch in length, and contains a hard elongated seed or kernel. It is both sweet and nourishing, and a fine fruit when eaten fresh. In Upper Egypt it ripens in June, but later in cooler climates. Its juice is frequently made into a kind of sirup, and sometimes into vinegar. Spirits are also distilled from it. But the fruit is mostly used in a dried state. The dates exported to foreign countries are of an inferior quality, being often gathered before they are ripe. The best are put up in the following manner: a light palm-leaf basket is packed full of the perfectly ripe fruit, detached from the stems, some juice or sirup being poured in to fill up the interstices. The edges of the basket are then sewed together, and it is stowed away. The very kernels of this fruit are useful to man, for they are ground up and given as food to the camels.

Frequent mention is made of the palm-tree in the Scriptures. We have already stated that Phœnicia and Phœnice, in Crete, derived their names from this tree. Other places also owe their appellation to the same source; an evidence that though

* Strabo mentions an Oriental poem which celebrates three hundred and sixty uses of the palm ("Geography," bk. xv., p. 742). The number three hundred and sixty is also Oriental.

palm-trees were more abundant in Palestine in ancient times than at the present day, yet they were not so common as some have inferred. Elim, one of the resting-places of the Israelites on their way from Egypt to Sinai, derived its name from the three-score and ten palm-trees which grew there amidst twelve fountains of spring water.* The place is now called Wady Gurundel, and is still marked by palm-trees and fountains.† Elath, probably now Akaba, in Edom, seems also to have derived its name from palm-trees growing there in ancient times. They do not now appear to exist; we only know that palm-trees were common in Idumea.‡ Tadmor in the Wilderness, still called by the same name in Arabic, signifies *the City of Palms*, a word which was literally translated by the Romans, who called it Palmyra. It was built by King Solomon,§ and at an hour's ride to the south lies the plain, or "valley of salt," in which David smote the Syrians, or Edomites,|| though some suppose the site of this battle is in a similar valley which lies to the south-east of Aleppo. Mr. Halifax, when he visited Tadmor, in 1691, found a few palm-trees still remaining in the gardens, and in a few spots around the city.¶

Jericho is repeatedly called "the city of palms" in the Bible. There were groves of them seven miles long at one time, and the tree was abundant at the time of the conquest by Joshua.** And Josephus, who was a contemporary of our Saviour and the apostles, repeatedly refers to this tree as abounding around Jericho and along the banks of the Jordan.†† We, moreover, find it alluded to as existing there from that time till a very recent period; but a few years ago a solitary palm was left, which has since disappeared. Old trunks are occasionally washed up on the shores of the Dead Sea. Engedi, identified with Hazezon-tamar, signifying the "felling of the palm-tree," is mentioned under the latter name in Gen. xiv., 7; and 2 Chron. xx., 2. It stood on the western shore of the Dead Sea, and was once a city second in importance only to Jerusalem, and celebrated for the fertility of its soil and for its palm-

* Numb. xxxiii., 9.

† Robinson, "Biblical Researches," i., 69.

‡ Virgil, "Georgics," iii., 12; Martial, x., 50. § 2 Chron. viii., 4.

|| 2 Sam. viii., 13; 1 Chron. xviii., 12. ¶ Van Bruyn, chap. lxviii., p. 343.

** Deut. xxxiv., 3; Judg. i., 16; iii., 13; 2 Chron. xxviii., 15.

†† "Jewish War," iv., 8, § 2, 3; "Antiquities," xv., 4, § 2.

trees.* Baal-tamar, mentioned in Judges xx., 33, also derived its name from the palm-tree. It is called by Eusebius Beit-tamar—"the house of the palm-tree"—and is supposed to be identical with the spot "between Ramah and Bethel, in Mount Ephraim," where Deborah the prophetess "dwelt under the palm-tree, and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment."† Bethany—"the house of dates"—indicates that the palm-tree grew on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, which is further confirmed by the fact that, just before his crucifixion, our Lord went over that mountain riding upon an ass, while the people met him with "branches of palm-trees" which they strewed in his path.‡ The tree doubtless abounded in the vicinity of Jerusalem, as did the olive, for it is mentioned that, when the Feast of Tabernacles was first kept by the Jews after the captivity, the proclamation was given out that the people "go forth unto the mount and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees to make booths.§ This graceful tree is, however, no longer to be seen in the neighborhood of Jerusalem.

The palm-tree was anciently used as a model in architectural art. The earliest example of it may be seen among the temples of Egypt. Solomon adorned "the walls of the Temple round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm-trees, and open flowers within and without."|| The principal central building, "the greater house," was adorned with golden bass-reliefs representing "palm-trees and chains."¶ In Ezekiel's vision of the Temple, also, the pillars which supported the porch were carved in the form of palm-trees; the walls and the doors were alike adorned with carvings of this tree.** But it is not in Palestine alone that the palm-tree seems to have been a favorite model for architectural decoration; Herodotus speaks of the hall of the Temple of Sais, in Egypt, which was adorned in a similar manner.†† This tree also frequently occurs upon the carved walls of the ancient palaces of Nineveh.‡‡

In the East, at the present day, the same decoration is fre-

* Pliny, "Natural History," v., 17.

† John xii., 13.

|| 1 Kings vi., 29; vii., 36.

** Ezek. xl., 16; xli., 18-20.

†† Layard, "Nineveh," ii., 110, 301, 304.

† Judg. iv., 4, 5.

§ Neh. viii., 15.

¶ 2 Chron. iii., 5.

†† Herodotus, bk. ii., ch. 169.

quently met with. The Muslims avoid, even more than the Hebrews, the representations of living creatures; but the walls of their houses are often painted within with elaborate images of trees, flowers, fruit, and landscapes, among which the palm is conspicuous. At the Dolma-Bakcheh palace of the Sultan, on the Bosphorus, every window of the building containing the women's apartments has a picture of a palm-tree painted externally upon the lattice which covers its entire surface.

So likewise the beauty and gracefulness of the palm led the ancients to use it as an appropriate comparison for a fair woman. Homer thus describes Naasicaa, the daughter of Alcinous.* So Solomon, in Cant. vii., 7: "Thy stature is like to a palm-tree." Hence the name *Tamar*, "date-palm," was given to women. In the Old Testament we have three instances of this, viz., the daughter-in-law of Judah,† the sister of Absalom,‡ and Absalom's daughter.§ The beauty of the last two is particularly mentioned. In modern times, for ten centuries past, the cypress has been cultivated with so much success, and has become such a favorite in Turkey, especially to adorn the graves of the dead, that it vies with the palm in Oriental poetry, as an emblem of womanly grace and beauty. The tombs of women are ornamented with carved representations, often highly colored and gilded, of one or the other of these trees; and now, as in ancient times, a daughter is not unfrequently named *Tamra* among the Arabs, and *Armaveni* among the Armenians, two words bearing the same signification.

The fruit of the carob-tree,|| called husks in the English version of the New Testament, is spoken of but once in the Scriptures. It occurs in the parable of the Prodigal Son, where he is described as having reached such a depth of degradation as not only to associate daily with "unclean" swine, but to be ready to share gladly with them their meagre food.¶

This tree is of the size of a large apple-tree, with a denser foliage and a longer leaf of dark, glossy green. It is an evergreen, and grows both wild and cultivated, affording refreshing shade. The carob is common in Palestine, especially in those uncultivated tracts which are in Scripture denominated

* "Odyssey," vi., 163.
§ 2 Sam. xiv., 27.

† Gen. xxxviii., 6.
|| Arabic, kharoob.

‡ 2 Sam. xiii., 1.
¶ Luke xv., 16.

"desert," or "the wilderness." It is also found in Egypt, in Syria, in the southernmost isles of the Archipelago, and particularly in Cyprus. Its fruit consists of a pod from six to ten inches long by one in breadth, which contains, besides several hard seeds, a sweet, thick pulp, not unpleasant to the taste when fully ripe. These pods, when ground up, yield a kind of sirup much used in the preparation of certain sweetmeats. They are, when dry, of a shining dark brown, and by contracting assume the shape of a horn, which led the Greeks to call them *κεράτια*, derived from *κέρας*, a *horn*, the word used in Luke xv., 16; and it is worthy of note that the Turks and Armenians also call them by a name which in their languages respectively has the same signification. The fruit closely resembles the pods of the honey-locust-tree, a species of acacia; and it is probably to this circumstance, and the fact that this tree grows in the wilderness, that we are to attribute the mistake of some commentators who believe it constituted the "locusts" which John the Baptist "did eat."* The monks of Palestine call the carob "St. John's bread." *Ἀκρίδες*, however, the word used in the original, belongs not to the vegetable but to the animal kingdom.

In spite of the Mosaic prohibition, the Hebrews occasionally violated the law which forbade the use of swine's flesh.† Under Mohammedan rule, this animal is never kept by Muslims, nor do Christians dare to do it. In Cyprus, however, where the Muslim population is small, the swine may be seen feeding in the orchards of carob-trees upon the pods which lie on the ground, for they fall as soon as dry; and in regions where the dwarf-oak does not offer them its acorns, the wild boars mostly feed upon the fruit of the carob. The dry pods, however, are not despised by men as an article of food. There is scarcely a large town in the whole extent of Turkey where they may not be seen in the market, sold with walnuts, raisins, and other dried fruits, and though not favorites, they are often purchased by the poor, chiefly for their cheapness, which is proverbial.

The prickly pear, or cactus, is not particularly mentioned in Scripture, yet its large leaves, thickening into branches below, form so peculiar a feature in the landscape that all notice of it

* Mark i., 6.

† Mark v., 13, 14.

can not be omitted. Its thorny fruit grows around the rim of the outer leaves, and is rather insipid. This plant is found only upon the alluvium near the sea. The banana-tree, with its large peculiar leaves, is mostly confined to Egypt.

We need not speak of the groves of orange, lemon, and citron trees, for which the coast and many of the islands are justly celebrated. The Jaffa oranges vie with the large seedless fruit of Crete, and the more juicy produce of Rhodes and Scio. Damask prunes derive their name from Damascus, and apricots are eaten fresh and preserved in various forms in many parts of the East. Quinces do best in Asia Minor, but the fruits obtained from the Persian grafts exceed every other variety in size, and are so sweet as to be eaten raw. Cherries are at home in all the Anatolian peninsula; they derive their name from Kerason, a town on the southern shore of the Black Sea. Strawberries grow wild on the slopes of Taurus and Anti-taurus, and are cultivated, as well as currants, at Constantinople. The finest pears come from Angora, though the fruit is indigenous in all parts of the country; and no apple in the world can surpass, hardly indeed equal, the muscatel apple of Amasia, in Pontus.

We have already mentioned the fact that the Hebrews considered the cedar-tree as occupying the first place in the vegetable kingdom. This was not owing to its superior usefulness to man, but to certain circumstances which caused it to be venerated by the nation.* It was from this tree that the timber was obtained which formed the chief material of the Temple built by Solomon to the living God;† and it was used in the erection of the palaces of their kings,‡ as well as the dwellings of the most wealthy and powerful of the Jews.§ At the restoration, likewise, after the captivity of Babylon, the second temple was built by Zerubbabel of cedar from Lebanon,|| and the same material was employed in the repairs made at a later period. For this purpose there was no tree so well fitted, on account of the straightness and extreme length of its trunk or central stem (which sometimes attained the height of a hundred and twenty feet), its durability, and the fragrance of its wood.

* 2 Sam. vii., 2.

§ Jer. xxii., 14, 15.

† 2 Chron. ii., 3, 4.

|| Ezra iii., 7.

‡ 1 Chron. xvii., 1.

The cedar of Lebanon was peculiar to that "goodly mountain." It probably once covered all the higher portions of the western slope of Lebanon, for the Phœnicians alone possessed it.* It formed a belt which reached to the snow-capped rocks that constitute its crest, mingled here and there with the fir, and giving place farther down to the massive pitch-pine, whose peculiar form has led to its being called the "parasol-pine."



Cedars of Lebanon.

Both the fir and the pine are found all over Western Asia; but the place of the cedar is usually occupied by the wild cypress. This is not the tall steeple-like tree, the sharp outline of whose dark foliage now characterizes so much of Oriental scenery, owing to the custom introduced by the Muslims of planting it in thick groves among the tombs of their dead. It existed anciently, though not in equal abundance.† The wild cypress grows on the tops of the highest mountains. It needs but little soil whence to derive moisture, and often is seen standing on the brow of a barren rock, firmly held in this strange position by the long roots it sends into the fissures and crevices near its base. It thus bears the brunt of the storm, and stretches out its half-denuded arms in the face of the tem-

* 1 Kings v., 6.

† Strabo, "Geography," bk. xiv., chap. i., § 21.

pest. This tree yielded gopher-wood, of which the ark was built.* It is the most enduring of all wood, and was the best material for a structure which was one hundred and twenty years in process of erection.†

The Phœnicians employed gopher-wood in the construction of their shipping, on account of its lightness and durability. It is now cut and its timber made into chests, in which valuable furs and woolen garments are kept for its fragrance, which is still greater than that of the cedar, and effectually preserves them from moths.



Oriental Woodman's Axe. (2 Kings vi., 5-7.)

It has been thought by some that the "algum-trees" brought by the ships of Solomon and Hiram, "with gold and precious stones from Ophir," of which were made "harps and psalteries for singers,"‡ were cypress. This hypothesis is based upon the fact that "in Italy, violins, harpischords, and other stringed instruments are made of cypress-wood." This is evidently an error, for the cypress grows wild to this day on the heights of Lebanon; and it was used by the Tyrians, as we have already stated, in the construction of their ships. If Ophir was in India, the algum might be cinnamon-wood.

There appears to be little doubt that the name "cedar" was applied by the ancients, not to one particular species of conifera alone, but to a variety of forest-trees which presented the same general appearance. Some of the timber found in the ancient palaces of Nineveh has been proved, by microscopic examination, to be yew; yet the inscriptions describe it as cedar, which the Assyrian kings imported from Lebanon.§

The specimens, however, which still remain of this remarkable tree fully justify the admiration of the Hebrews; nor were they the only people who held it in high esteem. The cedar, but slightly different from that of Lebanon, is found on

* Gen. vi., 14.

† Gen. vi., 3.

‡ 2 Chron. ix., 10, 11.

§ Layard, "Nineveh and Babylon," pp. 356, '57.

Mount Taurus, and extends eastward to the Himalayas. It also grows upon the mountains of Numidia, as well as on the islands of Cyprus and Crete. The testimony of the ancients is unequivocal respecting the durability of its wood. The cedar timbers of the Temple of Diana had lasted four hundred years when it was burned by the hand of an incendiary; and the beams of Numidian cedar in the Temple of Apollo, at Utica, had lasted one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight years;* while Solomon's Temple, when burned by Nebuchadnezzar, had been standing above four hundred years.†

Most of the cedars which once adorned Mount Lebanon have disappeared. The tree is now confined to two or three localities lying above Tripoli, on the Syrian coast, and near the Maronite convent of Canobin, in a semicircular hollow or valley open only toward the west. This spot is about six thousand four hundred feet above the sea, and three hundred feet below the highest peak of Lebanon. The cedars here stand in a cluster or grove which occupies the hollow, and are about four hundred in number: a dozen of these trees are very large and old, generally consisting of several trunks starting from the same root, with the branches spreading out to a considerable distance, and the entire stem nearly straight to the summit of the tree. Three hundred of the trees in this interesting grove are young and small, and the remainder are of intermediate sizes. The beautiful smooth cones, about three inches in length, usually growing in pairs as they ripen, drop their seeds upon the ground, which sprout up in every direction from the bed of dried leaves that enriches the soil underneath. It would be easy to multiply these trees by transplanting them beyond their present limit, but improvement and thrift are not the order of the day in Turkey. This grove is preserved from destruction by the superstitious veneration of the neighboring inhabitants, a sentiment not unfrequently entertained toward natural objects of a similar character in many parts of the country.

Most of the population of this region are Maronites, who have a small chapel attached to this grove; and the mountaineers of the adjacent villages gather here once a year, on the

* Pliny, "Natural History," xii., 40; xiii., 5.

† 2 Kings xxv., 9.

Feast of the Transfiguration, to witness the celebration of mass and engage in festivities.

This grove of cedars on the heights of Lebanon may be regarded as a link between the days of Solomon, when the Hebrew commonwealth reached its highest prosperity, and our modern times.

The oak and the terebinth seem often to have been confounded together by the translators of the Bible. Both trees, doubtless, abounded in ancient Palestine. They still flourish there, as well as in Syria and Asia Minor. They resemble each other much in their general appearance, are alike long-lived; and being well adapted to afford a refreshing shade, single trees are often planted on the outskirts, and sometimes in the centre of a village, and are favorite places of resort for both sexes and all ages. It does not, however, require much attention to discover the difference between these two trees. The general form of the trunk of the terebinth is more regular than that of the oak, although of the two the bark of the former is more rough. The outspreading branches of the terebinth begin higher up than those of the oak, and its leaves are a regular oval, of a somewhat deeper green, but not so glossy. The greatest difference, however, consists in the fruit of the two trees; for, in place of the acorn produced by the oak, the terebinth bears a fruit of the size of a small pea, and, in the case of one variety, four times as large. It consists of a white shell, holding an oily pulp, and contained in a bluish-green pellicle. The fruit grows in clusters from short stems, and in some places, where the tree is abundant, oil is extracted from the berries by crushing them like olives.* The terebinths we have described are wild or ungrafted. There is a smaller species of this tree called the pistachio, varying from fifteen to thirty feet in height, which produces a nut three-quarters of an inch in length, and very delicate and agreeable to the taste. The term "terebinth" is the generic name both of the pistachio-tree and of the common terebinth, and the latter is often grafted with the former. The pistachio-tree is now rarely found, except near Beirut and in the neighborhood of Aleppo. It is, indeed, mostly confined to the latter locality, where it is pro-

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. i., p. 413.

duced in abundance. In accordance with a very ancient Oriental custom, the Aleppines are in the habit of sending this delicious fruit to friends in neighboring countries whose favor they desire to secure. Among the "best fruits" of the land sent by Jacob to the ruler of Egypt were enumerated "nuts."* The word *botnim*, translated "nuts" in our Bible, is rendered "terebinth" in the Greek and Latin versions, and can only indicate the nuts obtained from the pistachio-tree, which the Persian version calls *pusteh*, a word corresponding to the modern Arabic *fustuk*—pistachio.

Betonim, a town of the tribe of Gad, whose name signifies "terebinth-trees," seems to have derived its appellation from its pistachio-trees, whose nuts it probably exported. This mode of naming towns is still in practice at the present day.† Narli Key, the "village of pomegranates," near Smyrna, derives its name from the extensive groves of that tree flourishing in its vicinity; and so *Elmalû*—the "village of apples," etc. Dioscorides and Pliny, at the beginning of the Christian era, speak of pistachio-nuts as one of the peculiar products of Syria and Palestine, which had been introduced thence into Italy and Spain.‡

The oak is one of the most common trees of Western Asia: it forms such an important feature in some of its landscapes, and is referred to so frequently in the Bible, that we can not pass it wholly unnoticed. There are several species of oak. The stunted or dwarf oak covers many a tract of hilly country. It grows to the height of some eight to twenty feet, never attaining any degree of thickness. These dwarf oaks produce the gall-nut, which assumes great varieties of size, color, and form. Among these is the article exported as a drug. The only use made of the tree is to cut it down for fire-wood and the manufacture of charcoal; cattle, and especially camels, feed upon its leaves. When dry in the autumn, they are often set on fire by the nomadic tribes, for the purpose of obtaining a better crop of grass for their flocks.

Besides the gall-nut, however, which is a product of the Oriental dwarf oak, there are brownish-red (sometimes yellow)

* Gen. xliii., 11.

- † Josh. xiii., 26.

‡ Dioscorides, i., 1771; Pliny, xiii., 5; xv., 22.

tubercles or balls, of the size of apples, which grow upon the branches. They are covered with a glue, which gives them, in the autumn, the appearance of an attractive fruit; but they are spongy within, and full of brown dust. Ignorant travelers have called them "apples of Sodom," not being aware, apparently, that they are not confined to the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, but are found equally in all the hilly districts of Western Asia.* The accompanying illustration is half the natural size in diameter.



The Apple of Sodom.



Valonea Acorn.

Another species of oak is called *Valonea*, a word doubtless derived from the Hebrew *Allon*. It produces a small acorn, whose "cup" is of very great size, and is extensively exported as an article of commerce, being used throughout Europe for tanning purposes. No less than 150,000 hundred-weight is imported annually into Great Britain alone from Western Asia and South-eastern Europe.

* Strabo, bk. xvi., chap. ii., § 45; Curzon, 181.

This species of oak is highly graceful, and of beautiful proportions. Its leaf is regular, and of a light green. It covers extensive tracts in Asia Minor, where it grows chiefly on the red sandstone formation. It is also found in dense forests in Gilead and Bashan, in Palestine.

The more common oak, however, of the land of Israel is the same which is found all over Europe. Its leaf is small, dark, and shining, and it attains a great size. We have seen oaks that measured more than twenty feet in circumference, and whose shadow covered an area of at least one hundred feet in diameter. These fine old trees are generally found planted on a smooth terrace, in the square of a village, or in some spot of easy access.* Such a tree, or several of them together (for the word is variously rendered), were planted by Abraham at the well of Beersheba—an event deemed of sufficient importance to be mentioned in the sacred text.† But in many cases there can be no doubt that, instead of the tree (or “grove”) being planted for the accommodation of the village, the village itself was built around the tree in order to secure its shade. We have ourselves seen such a process taking place.

An Oriental rarely plants any but fruit-bearing trees, and the scarcity of fuel offers a strong temptation to cut down simple shade-trees wherever they grow. But when he finds an aged denizen of the fields whose extending branches spare him the trouble of spreading his tent, no one is quicker than he to avail himself of this advantage. He smooths the ground under it, builds up a platform, and sometimes surrounds the area with a wall. There is often a younger tree near by, carefully preserved from injury, which is intended to take the place of the aged veteran whenever inexorable time shall prostrate him. There are many such trees in Palestine, and especially oaks. The fine old oak of Brummana, which crowns the crest of one of the lower heights of Lebanon, is easily distinguished from the harbor of Beirut below. The large cavity in its hollow trunk would shelter several persons at once. Robinson, in his “Researches,”‡ gives the measurements of the splendid oak near Hebron, which popular tradition has connected with the name

* Judg. vi., 11, 19.

† Gen. xxi., 33.

‡ Vol. ii., p. 81.

of Abraham. It is, however, difficult to reconcile this with other traditions equally authentic respecting a neighboring spot.* At any rate, there is not the remotest probability that an oak can live thirty-five centuries; so that the only possible connection between Abraham's "*oaks* of Mamre"† and the modern tree at Hebron is that of descent. The dimensions of this tree are certainly remarkable. This venerable oak, which grows by the side of a well, and is a place of resort for the people, measures as follows: twenty and a half feet around the thickest part of the trunk, and eighty-nine feet as the diameter of the shadow of its foliage under a vertical sun.

The oak is also planted by the graves of the dead, unless the oak groves which are used as burial-grounds may have existed already, and were appropriated for this purpose. Such trees are always respected, and are never touched by the woodman's axe. It must not be understood, however, that any sacred character attaches to the oak, or any other tree planted by the graves of the dead. We, moreover, find different trees, such as terebinths and pines, besides the cypress and the oak, planted in groves to adorn the cemeteries of towns and villages, and the more isolated burying-grounds of the wandering tribes.‡

The oak still exists as a forest-tree in Palestine. This tree flourishes luxuriantly not only upon Lebanon, but also in Gilead, and particularly on the hills of Bashan: it is, however, being destroyed by the wandering Bedawin for the purpose of making charcoal. They light a fire by the side of a trunk; a portion of which being thus consumed, the tree is prostrated by the winter blasts. The Arabs then cut away and use only the smaller branches, leaving the principal part of the tree to decay and perish as it lies.§ From this and similar causes many of the noble forests spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures have long ago disappeared from the land.||

There is another tree which, like the oak and the terebinth, attracts the attention of the traveler in Western Asia by its size, its grateful shadow, and its being a place of resort for the people; it is the platanus, or plane-tree (also called button-

* Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," 142.

† Gen. xviii., 1, 4.

‡ Gen. xxxv., 8; 1 Sam. xxxi., 13.

§ Porter, "Giant Cities of Bashan," p. 53.

|| 1 Sam. xiv., 25; 2 Kings ii., 24.

wood), which, though not often mentioned in Scripture, should not be omitted in this sketch. This tree* is never found except in the vicinity of water. It often shades a well, a spring, or a fountain, and prospers even beside a torrent, whose stony bed lies dry during the summer. The platanus often attains a great size, and specimens of great age are not unfrequently met with. In such cases the interior portions of the trunk are apt to decay and leave a cavity, which forms a chamber of considerable size. We have known one which measured nearly ten feet in diameter.†

Several species of pine are indigenous in Western Asia, and are used both as fuel and for building purposes. The most useful of all is the stone or pitch pine, the first name indicating the stony soil (sometimes sandy) on which it grows, and the second the resinous matter it contains, and which constitutes its chief value. Even as fuel it is so highly prized that it is sowed and raised sometimes in the neighborhood of a city, which offers a good market for the fuel thus obtained, chiefly for the supply of the public baths. It is, moreover, from this species alone that are obtained the nuts contained in its cone, which are so highly esteemed in the East, and enter into the preparation of so many dishes. The tree is long-lived; its trunk is straight and bare of branches up to a considerable height, where they run out horizontally, giving the tree the name of "parasol pine," by which it is called in Southern Europe. The resin, for which it is chiefly valued by the country people, is obtained in the following manner: a piece of the trunk is cut out near the root, sufficiently large for the resin to exude, and after a twelvemonth chips saturated with pitch are obtained from the spot. These chips are cut into small sticks about six inches long, tied in bundles, and sent to market. The trees will stand this treatment for a number of years; they finally become top-heavy, and are thrown down by the wind. The branches are then cut away and burned as fuel, and the trunks are shaped into beams and rafters for the houses. The

* In Hosea iv., 13, the Hebrew word *elah*, rendered in our English version *elms*, is translated *platanus* by the Septuagint, which is doubtless a more correct rendering, elms being unknown in Palestine; but the true meaning of *elah* is *oak* and *terebinth*; and it is so rendered in many places in our version.

† Ainsworth, i., 49.

pitch with which they are saturated prevents decay; and we have ourselves struck with an axe a beam of this wood which had been cut one hundred and fifty years before, without being able to make an impression upon it, so compact had become its pitchy texture. In passing through a forest of stone-pines not far from a village, it is not uncommon to find all the largest and finest trees treated in this manner. There is abundant evidence that the ancients practiced this process for the identical purpose; and it is an interesting fact that the Greeks now call the chips of pitch-pine we have described, $\delta\alpha\delta\iota$, which is the same as the $\delta\alpha\iota\varsigma$ of the ancients.*



Stone-pine Cone and Nuts.

It is not strange that few allusions should be made in the Scriptures to the flowers and ornamental shrubs of Palestine. They treat of historical and ethical subjects, and allusions of this nature must necessarily be casual. This topic, however, illustrates too well some traits in the character of Oriental people to be passed by without notice.

* See Theophrastus, "Hist. Plant.," lib. i., cap. vi., § 1; lib. iii., cap. ix., § 3; lib. x., cap. ii., §§ 2, 3, etc.

We may begin with the general remark that we have never met with any desire or taste for the study of botany as a science, or any thing like an attempt to cultivate a large variety of garden plants and flowers. When they are not produced for the market, even the wealthiest classes are satisfied with a few favorite species, preferring the brightest colors and those which exhale the most agreeable perfumes, and endeavoring not to be left without some kind of flower or fragrant plant during any portion of the year. The rose and the carnation are decidedly the favorites of all classes, and are worn on the head, fastened under the edge of the turban over the forehead, not by the children and youths alone, but equally by the aged. Many other fragrant flowers are in great favor, such as the narcissus, the jasmine, the tuberose, the hyacinth, the lilac, and the violet; they are carried in the hand or worn in the bosom. There is also a large class of fragrant aromatic plants, sprigs of which are carried in the same way. The cassi, in Arabic *misk*,* is a small species of acacia, bearing a little golden blossom resembling a downy ball, half an inch in diameter, and of a delicious perfume. It is carried about the person, and scattered among linen or other clothing kept in chests.

There is no such thing, however, as a regularly laid-out flower-garden. The vegetable patches are marked out with a line, but the flowers must take care of themselves. The rose-bushes grow along the garden-walls, and other flowers and shrubs are at liberty to come up wherever they do not interfere with the production of useful plants. They have a domain of their own, however, the flower-pot, whether of burned clay, or of plain boards roughly nailed together, or even a fragment of a water-jar, filled with earth for the purpose. These are arranged along the walls of the court, upon the balconies, under the trellis, upon the edge of the terraced roof, or even firmly set in mortar along the edge of a parapet. There flourish in the greatest luxuriance every variety of the carnation; there flaunts the double marigold, pride of the Turkish inhabitants everywhere; and there is the lovely green of the fragrant never-failing "sweet basil," the *habisk* of the Arabs, called by the Greeks *vasilico*, which gives its name to many a blushing maiden.

* Is it the *shittah* of the Hebrews? Isa. xli., 19.

The wild rose grows in abundance all over Western Asia; its bright petals glow in every hedge and adorn every thicket. The cultivated species are abundant, and extremely varied. It is the land of roses, and the first of May is observed by the Christian population of Western Asia (a relic of heathenism) with feasting and rejoicing in the gardens and the groves, and collecting flowers, mostly roses, which are wreathed in garlands and hung over the doors of their dwellings. These they superstitiously avoid disturbing until renewed the following year.

The rose, however, does not commend itself by its fragrance and brightness alone to the utilitarian Oriental. Rose-water is distilled all over the country, and is largely employed to flavor various articles of food, chiefly pastry and sweetmeats, also as a remedy for diseases of the eye, and otherwise on various occasions described elsewhere. The light pink and the white are used for these purposes; other varieties are less cultivated. The ottar, or otto—the oil of roses—is obtained from a peculiar variety of this flower, which is exclusively produced in the northern part of Roumelia, between Adrianople and the Balkan mountains.

It appears to have been decided by commentators that the rose of Sharon mentioned in Cant. ii., 1, and Isa. xxxv., 1, of our version, is no rose at all, but the flower of a bulbous root. The varieties of these plants are not numerous, and if we except the tulips and their cognates, of which we shall speak by-and-by, they all offer but little attraction to an Eastern mind, on account of the paleness of their tints. The only exceptions, perhaps, are the hyacinth and the narcissus, both of which are favorites, combining as they do beauty and perfume. Some versions have employed the word “narcissus” for “rose” in Canticles, and we believe this to be a correct translation.

There has been much difference of opinion respecting the flower designated by our Saviour, in the Sermon on the Mount, under the name of “lilies of the field:” it appears to be the same as referred to in Cant. ii., 1, being there called “the lily of the valley.” We shall not stop to discuss the numerous candidates for the honor whose claims have already been advanced, but shall content ourselves with presenting those of the one we now suggest.

The red tulip is called by the Persians and Armenians

shushan, by the Turks *lahh* (as *Lalely Djami*, the Mosk of Tulips, at Constantinople,) and by the Greeks *κρίνον*. It is evident, however, that the lily spoken of in Canticles and Matthew is a wild flower, extremely common. Now there is a wild flower extremely common in all Western Asia, which presents the appearance of a small tulip, while it is superior to it in beauty, and easily mistaken for it. In French it is appropriately designated *Anémone des près*, or Meadow Anemone, and might de-



The Lily of the Field—Meadow
Anemone. (Matt. vi., 28.)

servedly be termed "the queen of the meadows." This delicate and graceful flower is remarkable for the great variety of colors it assumes: it is often seen of a bright scarlet, and of every shade of purple and pink, as well as straw-color and white. With these we include, under the denomination of "the lilies of the field," both the wild tulip and the wild poppy, for an unscientific eye can not distinguish the one from the other.* The Arab, when asked the name of these "lilies" and the other wild flowers blooming in the vale, makes no answer but *hashish*—they are "grass," vividly illustrating Matt. vi., 30. It should be borne in mind that our Saviour drew his similitudes from objects near by, or in sight of his hearers. The Sermon on the Mount, in which this passage occurs, was delivered near the foot of the mount—just such a spot as these flowers are wont to adorn. As he looked upon the plain below, the wild flowers to which he could draw a comparison were the buttercups, dandelions, daisies, and these anemones, tulips, and poppies; and he naturally selected the latter class, which is distinguished from all the rest by the brightness of their hues; and some of which, we may easily imagine, as is often done at this very day, had been gathered and arranged by some of the children and presented to the rabbi. We have already mentioned that these flowers grow upon the lower

* See Lynch, p. 225; Thevenot, 181; Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 100, 137; Van de Velde, i., 205.

slopes of the hills; they often peer from under the edges of the thorny bushes;* and such are the places which are frequented at night until the early morning by the fearless roe or the foolish young hart.†

We have spoken of the wild poppy as one of the flowers which our Saviour may have included under the generic name of "lilies of the field." The poppy is, however, extensively cultivated for the sake of the opium which is obtained from it, and was doubtless known to the ancients, though no allusion to it is met with in the Scriptures. It is a taller and much stronger plant than the wild variety, generally attaining the height of three and a half or four feet. The flower is white, and the seed is thrown broadcast in the field, which is carefully inclosed with a hedge. The drug is obtained in the following manner: when the plant has attained a certain



The Opium Poppy.

size, each stem is tied sufficiently tight to prevent the sap from rising higher, and an incision is made for it to ooze out: this sap, hardened by evaporation and the heat of the sun, constitutes what is called opium, of which laudanum is a decoction. After the juice has been obtained in the manner we have described, the tie is unfastened, that the seed may be brought to maturity. From this seed an oil is extracted, which, though not wholly free from the noxious qualities of the drug, is used both as food and to burn. The poppy is cultivated in Turkey, in the central part of the plateau of Asia Minor, about the region of Afion Karahissar, which takes its name from the drug *afion*, meaning opium. It is not much used in the country now, the shops in which it was smoked at the capital being shut up, we believe. The Turkish opium is said to bring a higher price in China than that which is raised in India.

* Cant. ii., 2.

† Cant. viii., 14.

A treatise on botany, however, would alone do justice to the immense variety and great beauty of the wild flowers of Bible lands. We have only sought to represent the general impression produced upon the Oriental mind. The same might be said of flowering shrubs and trees, whether wild or cultivated in gardens, such as the lilac and several varieties of acacia, the peacock and the silk-tree, and the "pride of India" or "Solomon's tree." Among the wild shrubs, however, there are two—one the denizen of the plain, the other of the mountain—which affect the landscape too strongly by their general diffusion to be passed over in silence. The oleander grows to the height of twelve or fifteen feet, and is confined to the banks of the rivers—the Jordan, the Kishon, the Orontes, and most of the streams of Western Asia—often forming a thick border of deep green, varied in the spring by bright red flowers. The leaves are narrow, and six inches long. The plant often grows on the banks of a torrent, which contains water only during the rainy season. It is a marked and peculiar feature of the East. So is the "tree-strawberry:" its fruit is fair but insipid, round, rather orange than red, and of the size of a strawberry. Its little bell-shaped flowers are white and in clusters; but its more marked peculiarity lies in the redness of its bark and the glossy green of its foliage, which give the landscape a tint unlike that of any other shrub or bush. All the peculiarities of natural scenery have their share in forming the minds of those who come in daily contact with them.

We should not forget that the fruit-trees, and even the flowers and shrubs we have described, have a native origin, and existed, therefore, in ancient times. They may have been improved by the lapse of ages, but rice, coffee, and tobacco alone have been imported. Many of the productions of Western Asia, however, have been transported to Europe, conferring untold benefits upon its population.

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS.—CATTLE, SHEEP, AND GOATS.

WE have already spoken of the ox as being the animal to which the people of Western Asia are exclusively indebted for the cultivation of the soil, although the ass is sometimes made to bear the yoke by his side. The horse is deemed too noble, and perhaps too spirited a creature, to be employed in labor of this nature. Mules were rare in very ancient times, possessed by the rich alone, and used not in carrying burdens, as at present, but exclusively for riding.

There must doubtless have been a time when the ox was wild, and man was compelled to till the ground with his own unaided hand; but that time lies beyond the memory of man. The oldest historical records, next to the Holy Scriptures, which we possess, are engraved upon the granite monuments of Egypt, in the language of signs, commonly called hieroglyphics (sacred carvings), having been thus designated by the Greeks on account of their knowledge being confined to the priesthood. It appears from these monuments that the ancient Egyptians depended for the cultivation of their fields upon the labors of the ox, and that their estimation of the value of this animal was such as to lead them to offer him divine honors. Their principal object of worship consisted of a bull, whose breed was preserved with the greatest care, and whose body was embalmed after death, and buried amidst the lamentations of the whole nation. The Hebrews had become conversant with this idolatrous worship during their two hundred years' residence in Egypt. There is every reason to believe that many of them participated in the idolatrous practices of their Egyptian masters; and their attachment to these rites was so strong that, though they had every reason to hate their cruel oppressors, yet they were scarcely withdrawn from their tyranny when they constrained Aaron to make them a golden calf,

that they might worship it after the Egyptian mode.* Indeed that whole generation of Israelites had to be destroyed, during forty years' wanderings in the wilderness, to eradicate from the people's hearts their attachment to that temporary home for which they yearned, and whose slavery and idolatry they preferred to the land of freedom. Yet not even thus could this form of idolatry be obliterated from the mind of the Israelite; as he guided the plow, following his patient ox, which also threshed his wheat upon the threshing-floor, he was constantly reminded of the great value of this animal, which has ever been in the East, more than in any other land, the dependence and help of the agriculturist. And so Jeroboam, when he had successfully led the rebellion of the ten tribes of Israel against the son of Solomon, anxious to prevent the people from going up to Jerusalem yearly, and from being tempted to return to their old allegiance, set up two golden calves—one at Dan, at the foot of Hermon, the northern extremity of his dominions; the other at Bethel, near his southern border, a spot peculiarly sacred to the mind of the Hebrew.† These idols continued to be the object of Israel's worship until the destruction of their kingdom, and their forcible removal from the land.

But the Egyptians and the Israelites were not the only ancient nations that understood the value of the ox. It was probably the first animal tamed by man for the sake of the service he could render. It even appears to have been the first commercial medium, before the precious metals came into use, as was the case until lately in South Africa; hence the first coins made were stamped with the effigy of an ox. The earliest sculptures bear images of this animal as used by man, and the earliest histories represent him in a state of domesticity. Cattle were owned by Abraham‡ and by the Canaanites.§ Job possessed a thousand yoke of oxen;|| and the Hebrews owned many in Egypt,¶ which they took away with them.** So common had the animal become in the neighboring nations, that when the Israelites destroyed the Midianites they captured no less than seventy-two thousand head of cattle.††

The cattle of Palestine are generally small, and decidedly in-

* Exod. xxxii., 4-6.

† Gen. xii., 16; xiii., 7.

‡ Exod. ix., 4.

† 1 Kings xii., 28, 29; Gen. xxxv., 14, 15.

§ Gen. xx., 14.

** Exod. xii., 38.

|| Job xlii., 12.

†† Numb. xxxi., 33.

ferior to those of more northern climes. The cause is doubtless to be found in the scanty pastures of a land laid waste for many centuries by ever-returning foes, and many of whose springs of water have been drying up; but there are districts in which the cattle are finer, and in a far better condition. There are probably as fine "bulls of Bashan" now grazing on the plains of the Hauran as there were in King David's time.* The table-lands of Asia Minor produce, in many parts, still finer cattle, not inferior probably to those of ancient times.

The ox which Solon of Crotona is said first to have carried on his back, then to have killed with a single blow of his fist on the forehead, and finally to have devoured entire, can not have been of a very great size. On the other hand, however, the mummies of the Egyptian bull, deified under the name of *Apis*, prove that those animals fully attained the size of our cattle of colder climates, a result owing, doubtless, to a choice and abundant diet, as was the case with the heroes of Homeric times.

When oxen are not actually at work, they are sent to the pasture with the rest of the herd. The latter is made up of all the cattle belonging to the village or town. Large proprietors, however, have their own herds, which graze in different parts of their farms or upon the public lands. In all cases the cattle are accustomed to collect just outside of the village, town, or farm premises, at an early hour in the morning, when the herdsman appears, generally accompanied by his dog, and usually carrying a loaded pistol in his belt, and a stick in his hand, at one end of which is a large knob or ball. When the herd is large, several herdsmen are employed, aided by lads, who are training for the business. These people are rough, both in appearance and in character, a natural consequence of the life they lead. Following the cattle from morning until night over the uncultivated portions of the land, they must often defend their charge against robbers, and are not unfrequently compelled to fight the wolves, and the more rare panther, which seek to prey upon the herd.† It is an arduous life, and those alone among the people pursue it who can find no

* Psa. xxii., 12; Ezek. xxxix., 18; see also Porter, "Giant Cities of Bashan," p. 15.

† 1 Sam. xxi., 7; xxii., 17-19.

easier mode of support.* The herdsman's wages consist of a small sum paid him for each head of cattle committed to his charge.

The village herd contains not only such cattle as are not needed in the field for the ensuing day, but all the domestic animals owned by the villagers which can be spared and sent to feed in the fields. There are the oxen, the bulls, the cows, and the calves of various ages; the she-asses and their colts, with perhaps some superannuated *paterfamilias* of a jackass, no longer able to work, and favored with his board; there is the huge and ponderous buffalo, accompanied by its calf, whose clumsy gambols excite the admiration of the whole drove; and if the village possess no flock of sheep or goats, a few of these animals are interspersed with the motley crew. As they proceed on the highway toward the fields, and especially when they return, with brisker step, toward home by the same road, a cloud of dust marks their progress in the dry summer season. We have often stood, or sat, about sunset, at the entrance of a village, to see the herd come in. It is the merriest hour of the day, for all the little children then rush out to meet the drove and have a gambol and a chase home, each after his own pet lamb, calf, or colt. Horses and camels are never herded promiscuously with other animals, but feed by themselves.

We have had occasion to notice some of the habits of cattle in the East, when spending a few days at a time at the farms of friends. The cattle of different localities differ both as to form and color. Those of Balu-kesar, in Asia Minor, are the finest in the country, and resemble the cattle of Southern Russia. They are comparatively large, well formed, and gray, with black extremities. At Aleppo we have seen cattle which resemble those of Germany in miniature, gracefully proportioned and of a fine uniform red.

The herd is always ruled by the most powerful bull, usually a strong, wiry young animal, which brooks no competitor. It often happens that, after many a fight, the conqueror drives his rival away from the herd; the latter wanders about the fields, bellowing with impotent rage, and trampling or devouring the standing grain.† It is these bulls especially that are

* Amos vii., 14.

† Virgil, "Georgics," bk. iii.

dangerous, for they attack any one that happens to come in their neighborhood.* Reconciliation of the foes in such a case is impossible, and all that is left the herdsman to do is to catch the infuriated beast and appropriate his strength to the service of the plow. We had once the good fortune to witness the capturing of such an animal. He had been roaming about and doing much mischief for several days, when two horsemen were sent out to bring him in. Each of them was provided with a long rope, one end of which was firmly fastened to his saddle-bow, while the other was tied into a noose or "lasso," held open by the rider at the end of a forked pole. When they approached the bull, he started to run, and they gave chase, riding on each side of him, and thus succeeded in flinging the two lassos around his horns. At the same instant one of the horsemen spurred his animal so as to take the lead of the bull, while the other held somewhat back, in order to prevent his running at his companion's horse. The bull, however, was not inclined to submit: making a violent effort, he broke one of the ropes, and rushing at the nearest rider, dashed both him and his horse to the ground, and was off again through the plain. It took the prostrate man a few moments to recover from the shock. We could distinctly hear the two men scolding each other for their mishap; but no great harm having been done, and knowing that the eyes of all the people of the farm and its hamlet were upon them, they were soon riding after their escaped victim, and this time with better success. We now saw them coming up at full speed, the bull running between the two horsemen, the leader appearing to drag him with the rope fastened to his horns, while the other held him back. But the hardest feat was yet to come. The party came rushing toward the house, and grazed the trunk of a fine terebinth in the foreground of the building. The leader instantly making a circuit of the tree, leaped out of his saddle and began to twist the rope around its trunk. But the bull was not yet ready to give in. He ran so fast around the tree to disengage himself that it seemed doubtful for a few minutes whether he would not succeed in thwarting his pursuers and effecting his escape. In the mean time, however, the other rider

* Exod. xxi., 28, 29.

had dismounted and come to the rescue. He caught the animal by the tail, and, giving it a peculiar twist, brought him down to the ground, when his feet were tied together in a twinkling, and he became quite still and powerless.

On another occasion we saw a bull that was being led in the manner above described break loose from one of the riders, while the other adroitly fastened the end of his rope to a tree by the road-side; the animal, thus tied, succeeded in keeping at bay a number of men for several hours.

The nomads of the present day often keep cattle which are tended by their herdsmen;* they have not unfrequently a mark burned with a hot iron upon one of their haunches or shoulders, just as we see it in the Egyptian sculptures.†

People who are unacquainted with the habits of these tribes suppose that they roam about at hap-hazard, and that there is no plan in their migrations. This is not the case, however; all the wanderers with whom we are acquainted possess settled and permanent habitations, which they occupy during the coldest part of the winter. These abodes of theirs are rude indeed, often the ruined dwellings of former generations, but more frequently mud-hovels, sadly in want of repair, and generally shared by their cattle. During this period, the latter are mostly fed with straw, which the nomads obtain either by sowing fields themselves, or through plunder.‡ The greater part of the summer is spent by them on the sides of high mountains, where grass is abundant and flies and gnats do not torment the cattle. Here the people dwell in tents, but shelter their flocks and herds in permanent booths, constructed of branches of trees, and repaired each successive summer.§ The interval of country between their winter and summer abodes is traveled over by regular stages in the spring and autumn, as rapidly as the condition of the herds and the flocks will allow.

In the warm climate of Palestine, booths often suffice for the winter shelter of the flocks. We have seen them thus protected even in much higher latitudes, and particularly throughout the extensive plains to the north and south of Sivri-hissar, where the people, like Jacob in Succoth, live in houses, and

* Gen. xiii., 2; xxx., 43.

† Gen. xxvi., 12; Judg. vi., 3, 4, 6.

‡ Wilkinson, ii., fig. 366.

§ Gen. xxxiii., 17.

shelter under booths their fine flocks of sheep and the Angora goats, for which that region is celebrated.* The Arab tribes, however, make their yearly migrations northward instead of ascending mountains, of which, except in the Hauran, their country is destitute. The great tribe of the Enezeh leads the van, and, when unchecked, crosses the Euphrates and the Tigris and overruns the whole of Mesopotamia.

It is worthy of note that beef is rarely eaten in Western Asia. One never sees it exposed in the markets of even the largest Turkish or Arab cities, except where Europeans are numerous enough to create a demand, and even there the meat stalls of the quarters occupied chiefly by the natives contain nothing but mutton and an occasional kid. It is not that there seems to be a prejudice against the use of beef, but rather that the animal is considered too valuable to be slaughtered for food; and, moreover, it is never fattened for the market, while the flesh of sheep is always in fine condition.

In the greater part of Asia Minor it is customary for every family, in the autumn, to buy a young bullock or a cow, which is killed, the flesh made into sausages, or salted, pressed, and then, well seasoned with a preparation of pounded garlic, strong spices, etc., it is dried and forms the essential winter provision of *pasturma*. This is also an important item of exportation to other parts of the East, the most highly esteemed quality being prepared at Cæsarea, in Asia Minor.

In the neighborhood of towns containing a considerable European population, diseased or accidentally injured cattle are killed, and their flesh sold in the market; but in the interior, on the contrary, the traveler occasionally meets with the carcass of an ox by the wayside or in the open field. The Hebrews, likewise, appear to have made but a moderate use of the flesh of cattle, which was mostly eaten by them in connection with their sacrifices. This appears to have been the case with the Israelites in the desert, for they would not so often have hankered after the "flesh-pots" of Egypt, had they been in the habit of slaughtering their cattle and sheep for food.† We shall speak elsewhere of the offering of cattle in sacrifice.

* See "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 208, etc.

† Exod. xvi., 3.

The buffalo, which is now found in all the Western countries of the continent of Asia, and even in Egypt and Italy, is a much larger and more powerful animal than the ox. His dingy black hide is almost destitute of hair, and his ponderous horns incline backward, almost lying upon his neck and shoulders. His great strength is turned to valuable account by his master, both for the purpose of plowing and of drawing the heaviest carts. This uncouth beast is particularly valuable in



Buffaloes in Palestine.

all swampy districts, which the malaria renders almost uninhabitable, even to animals; indeed, buffaloes can not live without the opportunity of frequently plunging and wallowing in mud and water. They are chiefly seen, when not employed by their masters, feeding in the swamps and lying in the muddy streams with barely their noses above the surface. These animals are of Indian origin, and are now found in a wild state, inhabiting the great swampy jungles of Hindoostan. The wild buffalo, called *arna* by the Hindoos, is fierce and untamable, in size one-third larger than the domestic species, and of such power and vigor as by his charge to prostrate a well-sized elephant. The tame buffalo, which bears in India the distinctive name *bhainsa*, appears to have been introduced into Western

Asia about the time of the conquest of Persia by the Arabs, in the seventh century, which accounts for the fact that no mention is made of him, not only in the Hebrew Scriptures, but, indeed, in any of the ancient Greek and Latin authors. He is now found in Palestine, and particularly about the swamps of the Hooleh, or Lake Merom.

We have been thus particular in describing this animal, because we deem it important to point out the changes which have taken place in Bible lands since the writing of the Scriptures, that we may the better understand what remains unaltered. We are aware that some eminent scholars have claimed that there are references in the Old Testament to the arna, or wild buffalo. No doubt, the rendering of the word *reem* by "unicorn" in our English version is a mistake, probably derived from the Septuagint. The animal referred to must certainly have had two horns,* and was very fierce and powerful. But we have no proof that the arna ever existed to the west of Persia; and it is impossible to refute the evidence of the late introduction of the *bhainsa*, or tame buffalo, which in all Western Asia bears one of its Indian names, *jamooz*.



Wild Ox of Central Asia.

Job, who probably lived in the Hauran, might describe an animal which existed only in a distant country.† But the other passages imply that the people who dwelt on both sides of the Jordan and the Dead Sea were not unacquainted with the

* Deut. xxxiii., 17.

† Job xxxix., 9-12.

reem.* We incline to the opinion that the animal called *reem* by the Hebrews was a very large and powerful wild ox, which has now disappeared from Europe and Western Asia, and is only found in regions north of the Caspian and Himalaya. It is fierce and hard to tame, and is known to naturalists by the name of *Bos Sylhetanus*. Very similar to this, but of larger size, and still fiercer, is the wild cattle of Europe, to which Pliny, in his "Natural History," gives the name of *Urus*; and Cæsar describes as the gigantic ox of the Hercynian forest, in stature scarcely below an elephant, and so fierce as to spare neither man nor beast, should it meet with either. This view of the question is confirmed by the fact that a large, hairy, and powerful bull is represented upon the sculptured walls of the Nimrood palace, near Mosul, as pursued and slain by the king and his hunters; while the hunting scenes of the later structures of Khorsabad and Koyoonjik do not contain representations of this animal—an indication that he had, at the later period, disappeared from the surrounding region.†



Chase of the Wild Ox, or Reem. (Isa. xxxiv., 7.)

We infer, therefore, that the common cattle of the ancients bore the same relation, as to size and temper, to the fierce and indomitable *reem*, or wild bull of Asia, that the patient and sluggish *bhainsa* now bears to the fierce and savage *arna* of India; and we regard the Assyrian sculptures of the wild ox, and his existence in the northern parts of the Asiatic continent, as interesting confirmations of the Biblical allusions to the facts of the natural history of ancient times.

The meek and gentle sheep has probably contributed, from

* Numb. xxiii., 22; Psa. xxii., 21; xxix., 6; Isa. xxxiv., 6, 7.

† Layard, ii., 327.

the remotest period, to supply the wants of mankind quite as much, if not more, than cattle. It seems, indeed, to have been the first animal brought into a state of domesticity; for we read of Abel that he was a shepherd, or "keeper of sheep," while his brother Cain, following the first and principal occupation of the race, was "a tiller of the ground."*

We have, indeed, reason to think that this was the first of the brute creation to suffer the consequences of man's fall; for it is a natural supposition that the garments of skin with which our first parents were clothed before they were driven out of Eden were taken from this animal, which they were probably then taught to offer up as an atonement for sin.†

This interesting animal has ever thriven in the north temperate zone, in many parts of which it is still found in a wild state. The wild sheep, the *mouflon* of Buffon, is met with at this day in Taurus and Anti-taurus, in Asia Minor, and, we presume, upon the mountains of Koordistan and Armenia, which are but the continuation of those ranges; and a variety of the same animal exists in the Rocky Mountains in North America. But the sheep is not, by nature, fitted to climb upon rocky heights, although his thick coat protects him from their chilling winds. He is evidently a lover of the plain, and thrives best in the domestic state, under man's effectual protection.

The number of sheep produced and reared in the region of country whose four corners are washed by the Caspian, the Black, and the Mediterranean seas, and the Persian Gulf, is truly amazing, and almost incredible, if we may judge from the immense flocks which are constantly pouring west and south-west from early spring until the end of autumn, in an almost continuous stream. The flocks which are reared in the northern portion of the region of country just described go to Constantinople and the adjacent provinces, but many are sold all along the way, to supply the wants of the towns and villages through which they pass. It has been estimated that not less than a million and a half of sheep annually reach the capital alone, from the region indicated, beside those which are supplied from European Turkey and the Danubian provinces. They are seventeen or eighteen months on the way.

* Gen. iv., 2.

† Gen. iii., 21; comp. with Gen. iv., 4.

The sheep reared in the southern part of Koordistan and in Mesopotamia supply the region of Tarsoos ('Tarsus), Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, going down along the sea-shore in order to avoid the incursions of predatory Arabs. Besides these, there are smaller localities in Western Asia where also sheep are reared, and supply the wants of particular districts. The region of Caramania, a part of Southern Asia Minor, for instance, is famous for its sheep, which are exported to the western part of the peninsula; and no one who has gone into the desert and met any of the Arab tribes, in their spring or autumn migrations, with their numerous sheep and goats, many of which are disposed of in the border towns, can fail to consider the wilderness a great breeding-place for flocks.



Moufflon, or Wild Sheep of Western Asia.

The sheep that are exported are males, or rams, the ewes being kept at home for breeding purposes. It is ever the former that are killed by the Christians at Easter, and by the Muslims at the "Feast of Sacrifices," or *Corban-Bairam*. Rams were likewise mostly offered in sacrifice by the Jews.* The Tabernacle was covered with rams' skins;† and the yearly tribute of Misha, king of Moab, who was a sheep-master, consisted of 100,000 lambs (young rams) and 100,000 unsheared rams, paid to Ahab, king of Israel.‡

The foregoing statements correspond with those we meet in

* Exod. xxix., 38. "Lambs" signifies, in the Hebrew, young rams.

† Exod. xxv., 5.

‡ 2 Kings iii., 4.

the Old Testament respecting the numerous flocks reared in these same regions in ancient days. Job, before his misfortunes, owned seven thousand sheep, which number was doubled on the return of his prosperity.* The flocks and herds of Abraham, and Lot, his nephew, who had migrated from the sheep-breeding Mesopotamia, became so large that the land of Judea could not contain them, and they were constrained to separate.† Just before crossing the Jordan, the Israelites were commanded to avenge themselves on the Midianites, and took the spoil of all their flocks, amounting in sheep alone to 675,000.‡ At the dedication of the Temple, King Solomon offered in sacrifice 120,000 sheep.§ In Palestine, the chief pastures for sheep and goats are on the east side of Jordan, the Sea of Galilee, and even the Dead Sea; and it was here the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh preferred to settle down with their numerous flocks and herds, rather than pass over Jordan with the rest of Israel, and adopt husbandry as their mode of life.||

The journeyings of the flocks of sheep from their breeding-places in Armenia, Koordistan, and Mesopotamia, to the distant markets where they are sold, take place in ordinary times through peaceable regions, and, as wealthy and influential proprietors always have a personal interest in their success, the flocks are rarely molested; still, the animal is tender, and his coat, which is left unshorn, in order to enhance his value, increases the weariness of the way. They travel by short stages, like Abraham and Jacob of old. We have often watched them as they passed on their long journey: the Armenian or Koordish shepherd always walks before, dressed in traveling costume, armed with a knife and pistol, and engaged, as is the case with most shepherds in the East, in spinning woolen yarn with a ponderous spindle. His diminutive ass walks before, carrying his provision and his cloak, made of thick felt, and oftentimes bearing in one or both sides of the saddle-bags a tired or disabled sheep, which is thus conveyed to the next market. When the flock is very large—and it not unfrequently contains several thousand head—there are three or four shepherds,

* Job i., 3; xlii., 12.

§ 1 Kings viii., 63.

† Gen. xiii., 6.

|| Numb. xxxii., 1-5.

‡ Numb. xxxi., 32.

some of whom go behind to look after stragglers, with dogs watching for the same purpose.

But these flocks are temporary, the men in charge simply conducting them out of the country to dispose of them. They are "hirelings," and neither become attached to the flock nor the flock to them. A shepherd's life, and the habits and character of the animal, are so frequently referred to in the Scriptures, and constitute, moreover, so important a chapter in Oriental life, that they seem to deserve our special attention.

All writers upon this subject, even those best acquainted with the East, have apparently failed to notice the distinction between the shepherd and the goat-herd, and between the habits and treatment of sheep and of goats; thus failing to explain some of the most interesting passages of Holy Writ. One would naturally gather from their statements that sheep and goats are always led together to the same pastures, and kept in the same inclosures; nothing, however, could be farther from the reality. It may be the case, indeed, when very few animals of both kinds are kept, but not otherwise.

We have already spoken of both these animals going forth to feed with the cattle, under charge of the herdsman; but a professional shepherd understands too well the difference between them to keep them together. The goat thrives best on rocky declivities, and is so fond of young leaves that he generally feeds among the bushes, and sometimes succeeds in climbing into a tree in order to obtain them, whereas sheep occupy the plains and gentle slopes, and always prefer fresh grass. The goat feeds all day long, and rarely minds the summer heat enough to stand for a few moments in the shadow of a tree or a rock: he is driven into the fold for the night, and let out again in the early morning. The sheep, on the other hand, are led to pasture only toward sunset during the greater part of the year, and return home in the morning, or spend the day, sometimes the noonday hours only, in the breezy shade of a friendly grove, or under booths prepared for the purpose.*

It is only during the coldest part of winter that the sheep are housed for the night. But even at that season the shepherd endeavors to keep them out-of-doors as much as possible, for

* Cant. i., 7.

their young are born from January till the beginning of March, according to the climate, and have to be kept with the ewes in the field, that the latter may obtain sufficient nourishment for the support of the lambs, which can not be conveyed to and fro between the house and the pasturage. This is the most trying season of the year for the flock. Snow falls and frost sets in, which kills many of the lambs, although the shepherd seeks to save all he can by carrying them under his cloak and "in his bosom."* This period, too, tries his own powers of endurance, for it is the rainy season. He cuts small branches of trees, and lays them in a pile, to avoid the consequences of standing in the wet. We have frequently known instances where the skin has peeled off completely from the soles of the poor shepherd's feet by such exposure. The only sleep he can secure is by lying on such a pile of branches or fagots, enveloped in his heavy felt cloak, or crouching in a sitting posture, with its stiff, heavy folds set up over him like a tent. A shepherd once told us that, being alone with his flock on one occasion, he went to sleep at night in this latter position, and found himself, on waking in the morning, half buried under a heavy fall of snow, with the sheep and dogs floundering around him. It is thus that, eighteen centuries ago, the shepherds of Bethlehem were "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night," when they saw the angel-vision, and were bidden to go and find the "Saviour," Son of the shepherd-king, "lying in a manger."†

We have been kept awake on stormy and rainy nights, while endeavoring to sleep in some little mud-hovel, by the flock in the plain outside, the tinkling of whose little bells announced them busy cropping the tender grass. It is, moreover, on such a night that the wolves are out, and most active; they are stout fellows, as we can testify, and a match for the most powerful dog in the country. It is on such a night, too, that the dogs are drowsy, shake off the rain-drops from their ears, and seek the shelter of a bush or a tree. We could hear the shepherd's voice shouting to them from time to time, to be on the lookout; an occasional shot was fired to rouse them up, and then a fight occurred; the growling and barking of dogs,

* Isa. xl., 11.

† Luke ii., 8-12.

and the shouting of the shepherds, and the firing of pistols, producing altogether an uproar of the most exciting character.

But danger sometimes comes from another source: when one of those sudden storms of rain arises which characterize the autumnal season in Western Asia, the helpless flock of sheep, frightened by the voice of thunder, huddle together under the nearest tree, and are not unfrequently killed by the lightning. We have repeatedly known a large number of them to be thus destroyed; and the shepherd has himself sometimes met with the same fate.*

The life of a shepherd is arduous.† His duties are too severe to be faithfully performed by hirelings.‡ It is rare, therefore, to find any one engaged in this calling simply for hire. Owners of flocks engage shepherds generally by bargaining for the delivery of a certain amount of curdled milk and cheese, and a fixed number of lambs and sheep, yearly, besides maintaining the flock undiminished; while the shepherds are paid for their trouble by whatever they can obtain beyond this. The latter, unlike Jacob of old, are apt to take advantage of the chapter of accidents to account for any decrease in the flock,§ and, like him, they are generally able to acquire, ere long, a flock of their own. A young man enters upon this calling simply because his father is in it; and having himself followed the flocks from boyhood, he has acquired that passionate fondness for the occupation which the most perilous and therefore most exciting modes of life are wont to call forth. On the line of the desert, and on the borders of the territory overrun by the Koordish and Turkmen tribes, not a little danger arises from the habits of these highway robbers, who, not content with driving away the flocks,|| also frequently kill the shepherds, on the principle that "dead men tell no tales." The weakness of the Turkish government, indeed, allows the existence in all parts of the country of bands of robbers, who go about during the summer plundering travelers, demanding heavy ransoms from wealthy captives, and stopping the government mails, whenever they learn, through their numerous agents, that they carry large sums of money. These robbers

* Job i., 16; Psa. lxxviii., 48.

§ Gen. xxxi., 39.

† Gen. xxxi., 40.

|| Judg. vi., 4.

‡ John x., 12, 13.

dare not show themselves in the towns and villages, but depend for their subsistence on the provisions they take from the helpless shepherds; the latter often, in consequence, aiding in this nefarious business, especially when in charge of flocks belonging to officers of the government, with whom the robbers share their gains. When the latter abstain from plundering the flock, they often claim a present as a reward for their moderation, and protection against other bands; so did David to Nabal, when he led the life of a *kleft*, or bandit.*

The shepherd leads an isolated life; his wanderings are not extensive. He feeds his flock either on public lands, or on a small run he has hired from a land-proprietor. A small booth for himself, and a much larger one for his flock, surrounded by a strong hedge, constitute his premises. The sheep-fold, however, often consists of a mere inclosure, surrounded by a palisade of thorn-bushes, or a wall of loose stones with thorn-bushes upon the top; and this is usually an effectual barrier against the wolves. The door consists of a few sticks laid across the entrance, and here the shepherd and his dog watch all night. Thieves sometimes climb up the wall and push aside the bushes; and sheep-stealing is as much a profession in Turkey as horse-thieving in some other countries.† By the mention of a porter in our Lord's parable, we are not to understand that there is a special porter to the sheep-fold, but simply that a shepherd acts as porter, opening or shutting the door. Our Lord's object in mentioning it was to allude to the great Porter of God's kingdom, who is Jehovah himself, and who has opened the door of the Church to the great Shepherd to enter in and govern his people. In the winter, particularly when the season is severe, the sheep are stabled, the door is locked, and the dog watches outside.

The shepherd seldom visits his family, who live in a neighboring village; but his little boys and girls often go to and fro, carrying to him home provisions, and bringing back milk, cheese, and an occasional lamb, which are the envy of the neighbors, who live upon the products of the soil.

The shepherd's garb is simple, consisting of a woolen coat of coarse-fulled cloth (*abba*), trowsers of cotton or woolen home-

* 1 Sam. xxv., 4-8.

† John x., 1-3.

spun, and a leather apron, the badge of his calling; his head is covered with a felt cap and turban; his cloak, also, is of thick felt, either smooth or shaggy, and without sleeves. It is often so stiff that it will stand up like a little tent. But the Bedawy shepherd, like all the dwellers of the desert of both sexes, wears a simple cotton shirt, generally of a dark blue, and a cloak, or burnoos, of camel's hair, with a gay handkerchief thrown over his head, and bound round his temples with a cord of camel's hair. But all the shepherds, both in the desert and elsewhere, are usually shod with the modern substitute for the sandal; the latter is, however, yet seen in Egypt and in the desert, and is in general use in Japan. The *charookh* consists, first, of a long strip or band of white woolen cloth, wound like a bandage around the toes, foot, and ankle, and so up to the knee, when it is turned down again, and the end made fast in the folds; this answers the purpose of a thick, close-fitting stocking, but is far more firm and impervious to thorns. The shoe itself, if we may so call it, consists of a piece of strong, untanned skin (wild boar is preferred by the Christians on account of its durability, while Muslims use buffalo, from religious scruples); this is cut somewhat larger than the sole of the foot, and is made fast by means of strings or thongs of leather, which gather the edges, and are tied around the foot very much like the ancient sandals. This kind of shoe is used not only by shepherds but by the inhabitants of all the remote villages; and it is worn by the peasantry of Greece, Italy, and Spain. It seems to have been used by the poorer classes in ancient times;* but muleteers and farmers, who live near large towns, use a heavy boot instead. Those who have worn this kind of shoe generally prefer it to any other, as the Indians of America do their moccasin, to which it bears some resemblance. Still it is apt to slip in ascents or descents, from lack of a heel.

The shepherd sometimes carries a pistol in his belt, always a knife or dagger. From the leather strap or belt fastened around his waist often hangs a flute in its wooden case. This is made of a reed, perforated throughout, and having the edges of the upper extremity so sharp that, when blown upon in a peculiar manner, a sound is produced very much like that of a

* Gen. xiv., 23; Mark vi., 9; John i., 27; Acts xii., 8.



Shepherd playing on the Naï, or Flute. (Psa. xxiii., 2.)

common flute.* This instrument is called a *naï*, and is used by some dervishes in their religious worship; but being rather difficult to play upon, many shepherds, especially young lads, procure a common wooden flageolet at the nearest market-town, the fac-simile of which are found in terra cotta among the ruins of ancient cities. Besides this flute, the shepherd fastens to his belt a stout stick or "rod" of hard wood, nearly three feet long, which is an important weapon, wielded by his practiced hand,

* Wilkinson, i., fig. 141.

whether for a close encounter or to be hurled at an enemy. This short stick may be considered as occupying the same place as the boomerang, the famous weapon of the Australian savages, which was known to the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians, and is represented in their sculptures.* It is still used as a formidable weapon by highway robbers.†

The shepherd's staff varies in length from four to six feet, and is made by cutting the branch of a tree, olive being generally preferred, which is barked, and the thicker end gradually, and with the aid of fire, bent into a semicircle. In this shape it is tied and left until thoroughly dry. This is the goat-herd's or shepherd's crook; and he uses it to stop or punish, at pleasure, his heedless sheep or goats; and for this reason it is used by goat-herds rather than shepherds. David's allusion to the "rod and staff" is thus explained.‡ They are weapons, the one of defense and the other of rule, in the shepherd's vigorous and devoted hand, and constitute the surest guarantee for the protection of the flock.

The invention of fire-arms has not superseded the old weapons of antiquity, and it is almost as common now to see a shepherd armed with a sling as it was in David's time.§ This is particularly true of the Bedawin, or Arabs of the desert. Young lads wile away their time by throwing pebbles with their slings at marks which they set up, and we can, from personal observation, testify to the extreme accuracy of their aim. The ancient Israelites were also very skillful in the use of this weapon,|| which used to be an instrument of war.



Ancient Sling. (1 Sam. xvii., 49.)

Every shepherd carries on his back a bag or wallet, as he goes into the fields, in which he puts his provision of food, usually consisting of bread and cheese, with an onion or two, and garlic; and he usually carries a little box containing a variety of spices which are used medicinally. This bag or

* Bonomi, 153-'55.

† "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," ii., 21-28.

‡ Psal. xxiii., 4.

§ 1 Sam. xvii., 40.

|| Judg. xx., 16; 1 Chron. xii., 2.

scrip is sometimes of goat or horse hair; but the kind most commonly used is of the shepherd's own manufacture. He takes off the skin of a lamb entire (as described page 56), and carefully removes the hair; the extremities are then sewed up and slit into fine shreds, which hang down like tassels; two straps, passed over the shoulders, serve to carry the bag, whose mouth is kept closed by its own weight. This is the "scrip" constantly used by travelers on foot, or couriers, or runners carrying the post.*



Native Haversack, or Sachel, made of an entire Lamb - skin. (1 Sam. xvii., 40.)

As might be supposed, the isolation of the shepherds from the rest of the world, and the constant companionship of their sheep and dogs, generates a mutual attachment. Many of the sheep bear particular names, such as "Spotted," "Black-eyed," "Mother," etc., and they readily answer to the call of their master, as intelligently and faithfully as any dog.† It is also remarkable to notice the ease with which the shepherd is able to direct the movements of the entire flock, by means of peculiar cries or different modes of whistling. On a given signal, you see the sheep rushing toward him or scattering in every direction, standing still or defiling in regular order.‡ Some shepherds have a wonderful control of their flock; they will order the sheep to come down to the river's edge and drink, and, the moment they are about to do so, will shout to them to stop, the docile creatures instantly obeying. Nor will they heed the voice of a stranger. The experiment has been tried by persons who had doubts on this point; they have even assumed the garb of the shepherd, have imitated his cry, have called the sheep by name, but to no purpose: the sheep have invariably fled from the stranger.§ Yet sheep are very foolish animals; the whole flock will unhesitatingly run into danger, if only one or two set the example; or a silly lamb will gradually wander away from its companions, and then stand bleating and rushing hither and thither in despair, until the prowling wolf devour

* Matt. x., 10.

† John x., 3.

‡ John x., 4.

§ John x., 5.

it; or the anxious shepherd, leaving the "ninety-and-nine" sheep at home, goes in search of the strayed one, and, finding it, "layeth it on his shoulders,"* holding its hind-feet in one hand and its fore-feet in the other, as represented in ancient sculptures, and thus conveys it in safety to the flock. "Verily he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety-and-nine which went not astray."†

When the flock goes to the pasture the shepherd usually leads the way, though an experienced old ram carrying a bell sometimes takes his place. There are usually not more than two or three such in a flock, and the shepherd could not easily be induced to part with them. These leaders have a mark upon the forehead, branded with a hot iron,‡ while the mark of the rest of the flock is made with a dye of a single color placed upon the forehead and back, different from the color of the neighboring flocks, so that every shepherd knows his own sheep. When the flock is led to the watering-place, if it be a well, the shepherd has to let down his bucket of leather and fill the troughs from which the sheep drink.§ The best watering-place for sheep is either a running stream, or a fountain whose water is conducted through a long line of stone or wooden troughs.|| When they have reached the pasturage, the shepherd usually sits down, and, being irregular in his seasons of rest, is very apt to fall asleep, lulled by the continuous tinkling of the bells of his flock; and the sheep might gradually stray away from him, were it not for a device well adapted to the case. The shepherd wears on his right arm a woollen band, often tastefully knitted or woven by his mother, wife, or sister. When he sits down in the pasture, he calls to him one of the leaders, and ties the long loose end of the cord or band to his horns. These animals are so prone to follow one another's lead, that, should the flock begin to move away in any direction, the captive sheep makes such efforts to join them that he pulls at his master's arm, tinkling his bell incessantly, till he awakes him.

One of the pleasantest sights to be witnessed under the clear and brilliant sky of Western Asia is a flock of snow-white

* Luke xv., 5.

† Matt. xviii., 13.

‡ Rev. xiii., 16.

§ Gen. xxix., 2, 10; Exod. ii., 17.

|| "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 208.

sheep* scattered over the surface of a fine green meadow; the lambs skipping and gamboling in frolic; the shepherd sitting on the soft turf, playing with his flute; his favorite shaggy dog by his side, keeping watch in all directions; and, to complete the picture, we might add the long-tailed magpie, jet-black with a white ring around its neck, perched upon the backs of the grateful sheep, or hovering about them, catching the flies that trouble these useful creatures. The beautiful pastoral contained in the twenty-third Psalm bears internal evidence of having been written by the shepherd-king, who had learned from his own experience to understand and appreciate the indescribable charms of this simple mode of life. How often, as the time drew nigh when the sheep must return to their fold, have we gazed upon that beautiful picture drawn by Isaiah: "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young!"†



Oriental Shepherd-dog. (Job xxx., 1.)

But we must say a word in behalf of the faithful shepherd-dog, with which the Hebrews could not dispense any more than their modern successors.‡ We do not concur with the

* Cant. iv., 2.

† Isa. xl., 11.

‡ Job xxx., 1.

sentiment expressed in the following sentence, *i. e.*, that "Oriental shepherd-dogs are a mean, sinister, ill-conditioned generation, kept at a distance, kicked about and half starved, with nothing noble or attractive about them." This description applies to the street dogs of Turkey, which are probably the descendants of half-tamed wolves and jackals, and possess the meanest qualities of both; but such a judgment is wholly unjust when applied to the shepherd-dog of Western Asia, which closely resembles those of the ancient Chaldeans, if we may judge from the accompanying copy of a Babylonian sculpture.



Shepherd-dog, from Babylonian Sculpture. (Psa. xxii., 20.)

There are two species of dogs in Turkey, whose breed is kept pure, and which really possess fine qualities, namely—the greyhound and the shepherd's dog. Of the latter there are several varieties, all of which are characterized by their large size, and white or slightly gray color, and black noses. Those which come from the region of Batoom, on the Black Sea, not unfrequently stand three feet high, and can not usually be purchased for less than forty dollars apiece.

The shepherd-dog follows the flock, and performs his duties by a sort of natural instinct, and without special training. We well remember that on one occasion a shepherd brought us a present of a beautiful pup, almost like a ball of white wool or silk. He was kept for six months as a pet in the house, and was the universal favorite. But one day the shepherd brought his flock to within half a mile of the place, and that very day the young dog disappeared. Having occasion to go

to the flock on the ensuing morning, what was our surprise, on approaching it, to spy our young favorite guarding the road by which we were advancing, and to hear him give the usual signal of a sharp bark to intimate the approach of a stranger, before he ran forward to lick our hand. Both we and the shepherd made every effort to induce him to give up this gypsy life, and return to the luxury of a house and home, but in vain; nothing could induce him even to pay a short visit to the place where he had been reared and so much petted.

These creatures are faithful, untiring, intelligent, and brave even to ferocity. They will allow themselves to be torn in pieces rather than cease fighting for the defense of their master and flock. We have known a panther to surprise the flock at night, when she was bravely attacked by a full-grown dog and three young ones, not a year old. One of the latter bit the panther in the face, so that the tooth of his upper jaw entered her eye, and that of the lower jaw held her mouth firmly closed; and though his shoulder was broken and his body terribly lacerated by the creature's claws, he did not give up until the other dogs had torn in pieces and killed the common enemy. It is not safe to pass in the neighborhood of a flock of sheep without first attracting the attention of the shepherds, that they may prevent the dogs from falling upon you. These creatures are especially dangerous when met with at dusk or at night; the natives then employ the expedient to which they resort in the case of wolves. They take off their long white girdle and let it trail upon the ground as they run. Both the wolf and the dog are intimidated by this, seeming to regard it as a trap, and keep away.

The shepherd-dogs are frequently employed by the proprietors of the flock, and sometimes by governors of towns, in making "battues" for the purpose of destroying wild boars, or wolves, or even bears, when they become troublesome by their increase. In such cases their master has to go with them, and their sagacity, fine scent, and courage can be depended upon.

What we have said thus far of the shepherd's habits and mode of life strictly applies to those only who pursue this business as their sole occupation. We shall speak hereafter of nomadic life, and will now simply remark that it is customary at the present day, as it has been all along at different periods of

history, for young women to engage in leading and tending a flock of sheep at no great distance from the dwelling of the family, whose assistance they can secure in case of need.* We also frequently see women of all ages, in the neighborhood of nomadic camps, driving about herds of cattle, or flocks of sheep and goats, and leading them to the well or river to water.†

It is customary among Christians to purchase a young lamb to be eaten at Easter, and the same thing is done by Muslims, at the feast of *Corban-Bairam*. These customs are evidently relics of the Jewish Passover. The lambs are brought into every town and village, and their white wool is often dyed red in patches, in order to enhance their beauty in the eyes of purchasers. The usual price is from twenty cents to a dollar, according to the locality. It is a great event for the children of a family, who may be seen leading the little pet about, and vying with each other who shall give it the nicest handful of grass. The fathers must have quite a struggle to bring about the slaughter of these favorites of the little ones; for many of them are spared, and become installed as members of the family; and for this reason two lambs are sometimes bought, only one of which is killed for the Easter festival. Thenceforward the lamb is the children's inseparable companion. It follows the little girls to a pasture close by, or runs behind a donkey the boys are riding to the vineyard, and at night the little ones dispute who shall have it for his bed-fellow. It goes to sleep with their little arms about its neck, or "lying in its master's bosom, and being unto him as a daughter." So it was with the poor man's "one little ewe lamb" in the parable of the prophet Nathan;‡ and many a time since that day has the rich and powerful sheik or aga, when desirous to entertain a passing traveler, "spared to take of his own flock," but has taken "the poor man's lamb and dressed it."§ Attention should also be paid to the prophet's specification, "a ewe lamb," as casting a characteristic of peculiar meanness upon the act of the sheik; for the ram is exclusively eaten by the rich, and al-

* Gen. xxix., 9, 12, 13; Exod. ii., 16.

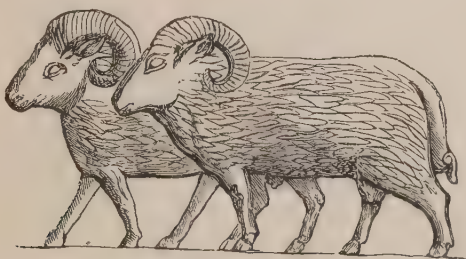
† "Innumerable goats and sheep crowded at the water, led by black-veiled Bedawey women."—STANLEY, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 85.

‡ 2 Sam. xii., 3.

§ 2 Sam. xii., 4.

ways preferred at an entertainment: its meat sells for double the price of the ewe in the market.

We have spoken elsewhere of the custom of killing an ox or cow in the autumn, and of putting up its flesh as winter provision for the family. The lamb purchased in Easter-week, and kept and fattened through the summer, is killed in the autumn, and its flesh is chopped up and partially cooked in the mass of fat obtained chiefly from the tail or rump. This is packed in jars, and a spoonful or two serves to flavor many a family meal through the winter. This is the "one sheep" referred to in Matt. xii., 11.



The Broad-tailed Sheep in Persia 2500 Years ago.

The common and the broad-tailed sheep are the only varieties of this animal known in the East. The latter seems to have originated in Arabia, for Herodotus speaks of such a sheep as occurring in that country.* This variety, however, appears to have been the only one in existence in Egypt and Palestine in the days of Moses, if we may judge from the directions contained in the Mosaic law with regard to the use of the fat tail, or "rump," of the sheep, in offering the animal in sacrifice.†

* Bk. iii., § 113.

† Lev. iii., 9. The English translators of the Bible seem to have been embarrassed by the importance given by Moses to the fat tail of the sheep, which they call "rump." The Hebrew *אֵלֶיָּה* is identical with the Arabic *أَلِيَّة*, which the Arabs pronounce *liyeh*, and apply only to the sheep's tail fat.

At a later period, or about 2300 years ago, Herodotus described it as occurring in Syria, and differing from the Greek sheep by having a tail "one cubit in width" (eighteen inches). It is now the common species in the Barbary States, in Egypt and Western Asia as far as the Anti-taurus, in Asia Minor, and the mountains of Koordistan, north of which it gives place to the common species. And it is proved that this was the variety described by Aristotle and Herodotus, from the excellent bass-reliefs of the animal sculptured among the ruins of Persepolis, in Persia.

The broad-tailed sheep is deservedly esteemed in the lands where it occurs, on account of its caudal appendage, which consists of an accumulation of delicate fat, a medium between tallow and butter, and an excellent substitute for lard. It enters largely into the preparation of Oriental dishes, being fresh and sweet, and by many preferred to butter, which, in hot weather, is apt to grow rancid, and never in those lands equals the butter of colder climates. The peculiar tail of this species of sheep consists of a mass of fat formed on each side of the caudal spine; its general form is nearly circular, resembling a



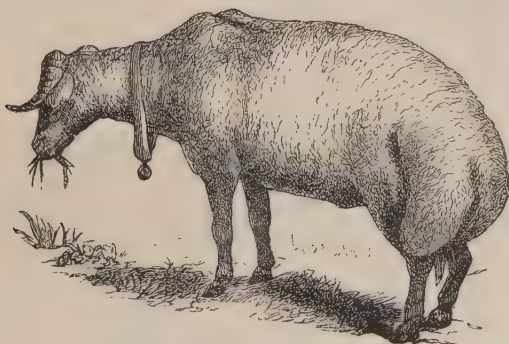
Broad-tailed Sheep, unshorn. (Exod. xxix., 22.)

chair cushion, while the tail proper extends several inches beyond it. When the wool is thick and long upon the animal, his form is effectually concealed. It is only when closely shorn that one can obtain an exact idea of this peculiarity. The preceding and following cut will show the appearance it presents before and after shearing. It certainly seems sometimes to be a great inconvenience to the poor creature; for though usually not more than twenty pounds in weight, it is not unfrequently three, and even four times as heavy.

This is the only variety of large-tailed sheep we have ever

met in Western Asia; nor, after many inquiries, have we been able to catch the faintest rumor of the existence of any other.

We have often wondered in what locality could have existed the original of the extraordinary picture published in Cassel's "Illustrated Bible," and in various religious journals and Bible dictionaries, representing a sheep with a tail of stupendous length, narrow at the root and enlarging toward the end, and formed apparently for the sole purpose of delaying the progress of the animal by dragging in its rear—exposed by its weight to inevitable excoriation and ulceration. To relieve the ill-fated animal from the pain and annoyance of such an incumbrance, it would seem that man has contrived for it a little cart drawn by ribbons (doubtless sky-blue), tied in a

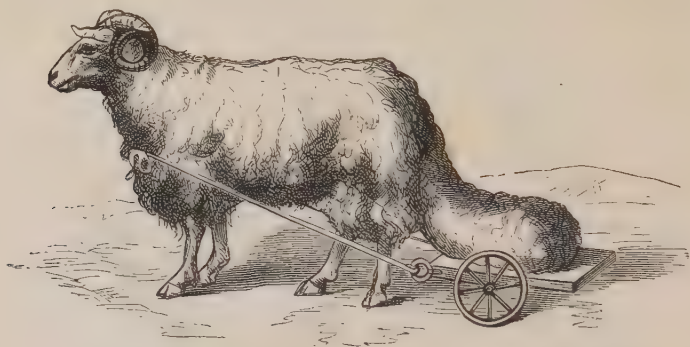


Broad-tailed Sheep, shorn. (Lev. ix., 19.)

pretty bow to a collar around the animal's neck! We had, indeed, occasionally seen a pet sheep kept in the house, and so pampered and overfed that its tail had grown inconveniently heavy; and some member of the family had taken compassion upon it and fastened its tail on one of the little carts which Oriental children use as playthings, and which, with their solid wheels, are tolerable imitations of the common ox-cart of the country. We have specially in mind at this moment four fine sheep belonging to an Armenian gentleman, each of which knew its name perfectly. The largest of these, called *Kara-geuz*—black-eye—was an uncommonly fine animal: it grew so fat that one of the lobes of its tail dropped off by its own weight; and, following the advice of a shepherd, the owner had a little cart made for it upon which the tail was fastened. A

wealthy Turk offered thirty-five dollars for the animal, desiring to offer it as a sacrifice on account of his son's recovery from sickness, but the owner refused to sell it. The animal was finally killed, and its flesh and fat were sold to the butcher for a hundred dollars. The diminished tail alone weighed forty okes, or one hundred and ten pounds!

But the tails of the sheep we have described differ so entirely in form from Cassel's illustration, that we felt confident our sheep could never have stood for that picture; and we began to wonder whether somebody had not discovered that sheep of Herodotus whose tail, as he avers, was three cubits, or four and a half feet in length, and had to be conveyed in a carriage!



The Broad-tailed Sheep, according to Harris. ("An Eastern Sheep drawing his fatt Tayle in a cart, weighing 40 pounds' weight or more.")

Finally, however, we accidentally came across "John Harris's Voyages and Travels," published in London, 1705, and found in it the original of all these pictures, as may easily be seen from the position of the animal.* But his copyists seem to have known more of the East than he did; they have simplified the harness, and substituted solid wheels instead of the elegant European spokes of Harris's original; they at least knew that a wheel with spokes had not been made in the East in modern times. Looking at the text in Harris's book for an explanation of his picture, we found a description of Abyssinia

* The picture in Cassel's Bible is evidently an unfaithful copy of Harris. One of our best religious weeklies, which never publishes illustrations, took the pains, not long since, to reproduce Cassel's picture in its columns as a faithful portrait of the "Syrian Sheep!"

taken from the lips of "Gregory," a native of that country, by Job Ludolf, in which occurs the following sentence: "They have very large sheep, whose tails weigh ten or twelve and sometimes more than forty pounds, so that the owners are forced to tie a little cart behind them to ease the creature and preserve the wool." This description agrees with our own of the broad-tailed sheep, as will readily be seen by comparing them. The author does not claim that the picture he gives of it was furnished him by Gregory. It would, indeed, be preposterous to suppose that this native Oriental was a draughtsman. Harris doubtless drew it himself from his own imagination, to satisfy the laudable curiosity of his readers. This is further proved by the pictures of monkeys also published by him, some of which are represented as "throwing sand or dust



Etruscan Sheep. From a Vase.

in the eyes of wild beasts* that came to set upon them." Gregory, however, or Job Ludolf, can not altogether be relied upon for the correctness of their statements, for the description goes on to add further the following interesting facts in natural history: "Ivory is not of the teeth of the elephants but of their horns, which grow out of their *head* and not their *jaws*, upon the brow of the males only;" and thereupon Mr. Harris gives us a very lively picture of a troop of elephants *without* horns "upon the brows," but with a single tusk in their mouths instead, tearing away and demolishing a forest of trees, while "a corn-field" is represented as "defended" against their ravages "by a tame she-elephant."†

* Lions.

† Harris, i., 391.

The present habitat or region occupied exclusively by the broad-tailed sheep is quite marked, and appears to have been nearly the same in ancient times, though it may perhaps have extended not quite so far north and west. The cut on the preceding page, copied from an Etruscan vase, represents a sheep with a very small tail, doubtless the same variety as is still prevalent in Europe, and apparently cut, as done by our farmers at the present day.



Four-horned Ram.

Rams are not unfrequently met having three, four, and even eight horns. The accompanying sketch represents a specimen that was old, and his horns small; but they are sometimes very large and fine. To an Oriental mind there is nothing unnatural or improbable in the prophet Daniel's beast, "which had ten horns,"* or the "Lamb having seven horns," seen by the apostle John.†

The utility of the sheep to Oriental nations is probably greater than to any other people, and is unsurpassed by that of any other animal. Its flesh is almost the only meat eaten in Western Asia, and is decidedly superior to the mutton of Europe. Its tallow, mixed with that of the goat, is exclusively employed for lighting purposes in all regions where the olive does not flourish, except in the rural districts, where pitch-pine is used instead by the humble villagers. We have already spoken of the uses of the tail-fat, or rump, which is sold in the market-places, packed in bags of skin. The milk of the sheep is richer than that of the goat, and the "leben," or curdled milk made of it, is preferred to any other. It is, however, mostly converted into white cheese, which everywhere finds a ready market; sweet curds are also made of it, and the shepherd's family is considered as living upon the fat of the land, especially if he can occasionally bring home a little honey, for he often has a hive in the forest, or some secluded dale not far from his sheep-walks.

But this animal is especially useful to man by furnishing him the best material for his clothing. Before the introduction of the cotton fabrics of Europe, the garments of the entire pop-

* Dan. vii., 7.

† Rev. v., 6.

ulation were made of wool, of silk, and occasionally of linen, with the exception of a coarse cotton cloth manufactured in the country and worn by the poorer classes; but wool and linen alone were known to the Israelites.* Wool is also extensively manufactured into carpets, the finest of which are made at Ooshak, in Asia Minor.† Smaller kinds are woven by the wandering nomads, and brought to the city markets for sale. It is an old custom among these that every girl weave with her own hand a *sejadeh*, or praying carpet, into the centre of which she works some of her own hair; this she sends as a present to her betrothed, who is then supposed to learn for the first time the color of her hair.

The trappings also of horses, asses, and camels, as well as the saddle-bags, which in the East take the place of the trunks and valises of the Western world, are made of wool; and it is worthy of notice that the figures and patterns of all these manufactures are quaint and peculiar, and after a fixed model, bearing a resemblance to flowers and leaves. We entertain no doubt of their great antiquity, which may be asserted of all the ornamental arts, and also applies to the trades and business of the East.

The goat is often mentioned in the Scriptures, and occupies as important a part in the life of modern Oriental nations as it did in that of the ancients. The wild goat exists at the present day on all the high and rocky mountains of Western Asia from Circassia to Arabia, though he has been pursued by the hunter from time immemorial. Moses mentions him in the list of the animals which the Israelites were permitted to eat.‡ This wild goat is the *puseng*, which closely resembles the tame goat of the mountain districts in every particular, save in his long and powerful horns, knobbed upon their upper surface. The hunters assert that when hard-pressed, this creature escapes by throwing himself down a precipice and falling upon his horns, whose knotted edge enables him again to recover his footing among the rocks.

These animals are of a fawn color, shading off into dark red. They climb the steepest acclivities with amazing speed, leap-

* Ezek. xxxiv., 3; Hos. ii., 9.

† See "Travels in Asia Minor," ii., 258.

‡ Deut. xiv., 5.

ing from rock to rock with admirable agility, and balancing themselves most unconcernedly along stupendous precipices.* Their habits also much resemble those of the tame goat.



The Paseng, or Wild Goat of Western Asia.

When they go forth to feed in the morning, the strongest males lead the way over the rocks and chasms, and the whole flock follow in single file. The hunters take advantage of this habit, and, secreting themselves, shoot several in succession, the fall of their companions not deterring the rest from pursuing the same path. When the winter

is very severe, they sometimes take refuge among the tame goats, and are thus secured by the shepherd, but if allowed to accompany the flock to the pasture, they are sure to take to the mountains again when the weather moderates. The latest naturalists consider the original of the tame goat to be the wild goat we have described; but the varieties of the domestic goat are very numerous in Western Asia, and inferior only to those of the dog. The difference consists in variations of form, size, color, quality of the hair, and even in the temper and habits of the animal. The Aleppo goat has excessively long, pendant ears, while the Egyptian is slender in his form, and commonly marked with two hairy wattles hanging at the top of the throat. The "Teflik" goat is peculiar to a region which extends about five days' journey southward from the ancient Ancyra (now Angora), and mostly consists of an elevated plain, or plateau, cultivated only on the margins of its rivers. It is called the Angora goat by Europeans, from the town in Galatia, which is the mart for the exportation to Europe of its valuable, soft,

* Psa. civ., 18.

silky hair, employed chiefly in the manufacture of shawls, and surpassed only by that of the Thibet goat, of which the well-known Cashmere shawls are made.

The Teftik goat is a small animal, delicate, and closely resembling in its habits the sheep with which it is always kept. Its color is uniformly white, and its glossy hair very long and wavy; the little kids particularly are beautiful after a shower, being covered with soft, shining curls.* As it seems to have been unknown in Asia Minor before the Turkish invasion, it



The Teftik, or Angora Goat.

is generally supposed that it was introduced from the region of Cashmere by some of the Turkmen tribes. There appears to have been a breed of goats very highly esteemed in ancient times, in the district of Bashan, the modern Hauran,† but it is impossible to say what were its peculiarities. All attempts to produce the Angora goat in other parts of Western Asia have heretofore been unsuccessful, yet the goats of the district of Konia (the ancient Iconium) bear a near resemblance to the Angora, though the quality of their hair is decidedly inferior.

There are probably more goats than sheep kept throughout Western Asia. The Bedawin of the desert keep more of the former, probably because they can better endure their roving

* See "Travels in little-known Parts of Asia Minor," vol. ii., p. 209.

† Deut. xxxii., 14.

habits; so it is likewise with the inhabitants of the mountain districts throughout the entire country. These statements correspond with what we learn from the Scriptures respecting the vast numbers of goats kept by the ancient inhabitants of the same lands. Nabal had a thousand goats feeding on Carmel,* the Arabians (ancestors of the Bedawin) brought tribute to King Jehoshaphat seven thousand seven hundred he-goats.† The keeping of goats appears to have been one of the chief occupations of this people.‡ It is worthy of notice that in nearly every description of a hospitable entertainment provided for a passing guest, a kid, and not a lamb, is the animal killed for the purpose, and the same is true in the case of a present.§ Yet the flesh of the goat will not compare with mutton, though the kid is tender and delicate, especially when boiled in milk.|| Goats' milk is generally preferred to any other, and is almost exclusively used throughout the East.¶ It is also made into cheese and *leben*, or sour milk. Goats hair, though of less general utility than wool, is much employed in Western Asia, particularly by the nomadic tribes; their black tents are made of this material,** and so are coarse kinds of cloth used as carpeting, bagging, "sackcloth," and even as garments for the poor.††

The difference between the goat and the sheep, with respect to their habits, has already been explained. The life of the goat-herd is in many respects less arduous, and fraught with fewer dangers, than that of the shepherd. This is owing to the temper of the goat, which is more intelligent, more courageous, and not so helpless as the sheep. It will not allow an enemy to triumph without a trial of strength. Moreover, the goat does not suffer from the heat, its haunts being on the mountain-side, where the fresh breezes blow. There is no need of feeding goats in the night-time, and so they can safely be protected within a fold. This consists of a wall of uncemented stones, or more frequently of a strong hedge made of thorny bushes, twisted between strong posts driven firmly into the

* 1 Sam. xxv., 2.

† 2 Chron. xvii., 11.

‡ 1 Chron. xxvii., 31; Ezek. xxvii., 21.

§ Gen. xxxviii., 17; Judg. vi., 19; xv., 1; 1 Sam. vi., 20; Luke xv., 29.

|| Exod. xxiii., 19.

¶ Prov. xxvii., 27.

** Exod. xxvi., 7; Cant. i., 5.

†† 1 Sam. xix., 13, 16.

ground. These folds are built in a mountain valley, or on the outskirts of a village; in the latter case they are connected with flat-roofed mud-houses, inside which the goats are stabled in winter. Even at that season of the year, however, they are not wholly kept in the fold, for as soon as the weather clears the goat-herd may be seen leading out his flock, and tracing a path for them through the snow to some cluster of bushes or trees not far off, where they may crop the evergreen leaves or nibble the bark. It is worthy of note that this most useful animal endures equally well the severest cold of the highest mountain ridges and the burning heat of the desert. The favorite places, however, for folding the goats are the natural caves, which abound in all the calcareous regions of Western Asia; and not only these, but the sepulchres of the ancients, as well as the ruins of antiquity, are appropriated by the goat-herds for the folding of their flocks. An inclosure of stones is made in front of a cave, so that both the goats and their master can remain in the open air in fine weather, while the deeper recesses afford them a shelter to which they may retreat from the rains and storms of winter. There every evening you may see a bright fire lighted and shadows moving about. Should you ask for hospitality, it would be readily granted, with a share of the frugal meal. Early in the morning the place is wholly deserted. The traveler, when he visits the tombs of the kings of Seleucia, the church of Tortosa, the ruins of Baalbec or Palmyra, sees tangible proofs that the habitations of the great and powerful of the earth have become an abiding-place of flocks.* In the early morning the goat-herd leads his flock to the pasture; but when they go forth along a well-known path, an old he-goat with tinkling bell takes his place,† whose majestic bearing is particularly noticed by King Solomon.‡ They move to the adjacent hills, covered with trees or shrubs, and aromatic herbs, the delicate shoots and flowers of which they crop with the greatest avidity. They boldly clamber upon the steepest rocks in all directions, seeming to vie with each other in displaying their address and sure-footedness. The goat-herd and his dog must be constantly on the

* Isa. xvii., 2; xxxii., 14; Ezek. xxv., 5.

† Jer. i., 8.

‡ Prov. xxx., 29, 31.

watch to prevent them from scattering too much as they feed, though a well-trained flock will obey their master's voice with tolerable promptness and unanimity. Goats are liable to be attacked by the same enemies as sheep; but as they are out only during the day, it is easier to protect them; they are, besides, more nimble in their movements. You may see them coming down the hills a little before sunset, advancing more and more rapidly as they approach, for they are expecting to meet their young. The little kids are active from their birth, but are not allowed for several months to follow the flock, both to spare their strength and to secure their mothers' milk. They are given in charge to the little boys and girls, who lead them a short distance off, or suffer them to feed among the tents of the encampments.* When, toward evening, the flock is seen coming home from the mountain, the kids are all shut up in one of the folds, and there is a general bleating of the mothers and the little ones, who are impatient to meet each other. The former are now all driven into another inclosure, across the door of which the shepherds sit down, side by side, in a row, with their backs to the fold. Each one is provided with a vessel or dish of some kind: the kids are then let out of their own fold, and there is a general rush of their dams to get to them by dashing through between the shepherds. Their speed is further increased by a little boy within the inclosure, who drives them toward the door of the fold. The shepherds make room from time to time for a goat to pass out; when, catching it by the hind leg as it dashes past, they detain it long enough for the milking. We have often wondered how the shepherds could so easily and expeditiously manage two or three hundred goats, some of which they milk dry, others only partially, while others, again, are suffered to pass through unimpeded, according to the condition of each.

The use of goats' milk by the ancients as an article of food is attested by the Greek and Roman writers, and is proved by the pictures on the monuments. The cut on the following page is a copy of a gem published by Rawlinson. Reference to this custom will also be found in Prov. xxvii., 27.

When sheep and goats are fed together in the same pasture,

* 1 Kings. xx., 27; Cant. i., 8;

the shepherd often has occasion to separate them, especially as the goats are apt to be troublesome to the sheep when folded in the same inclosure, on account of their butting propensities and general restlessness; hence it is a very common sight to see a shepherd "dividing his sheep from the goats."* It is done with the crook, by striking the goats either on their bodies or their horns, and thus driving them off by themselves, while the quiet sheep remain in their places. The comparison of the righteous and the wicked to these two classes of animals has a foundation in their respective tempers and characteristic traits, and to an Oriental mind is extremely graphic and appropriate. The goat is constantly compared, by the inhabitants of Eastern lands, to the Evil One.



Milking a Goat. From a Babylonish Gem. (Prov. xxvii, 27.)

* Matt. xxv., 32.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HORSE, THE MULE, THE ASS, AND THE CAMEL.

It is a singular fact that the chariot or carriage drawn by horses, so often mentioned by ancient writers, both sacred and profane, has entirely disappeared from Western Asia and Africa, though it has now become so common in the once barbarous Europe, and in the new continent of America. The only wheeled vehicles now used in Bible lands are of foreign manufacture, and of recent importation. The natives make and employ only the rude, heavy cart, with solid wheels, drawn by oxen or buffaloes, already described page 80; yet the chariot seems to have originated in the plains of Mesopotamia, and was gradually brought into use in Syria, Canaan, and Egypt. In the last of these countries the horse does not appear on the monuments before the eighteenth dynasty,* after which period he is often met with. So that this valuable animal had not long been known in Egypt at the time that Jacob removed thither with his household. When Joseph was proclaimed "grand vizier" of that country, he was made to ride in the second chariot of King Pharaoh.† He himself also sent either two or four wheeled "wagons" to bring his aged father, with the little ones, and the wives of his brethren, to the land of their adoption, and "made ready his chariot and went up to meet them."‡ Such "wagons" drawn by mules are represented on the monuments of Egypt. When the patriarch died, Joseph conveyed his body to the land of Canaan, accompanied by "chariots and horsemen, and a very great company."§

The chariots of Egypt were not employed for purposes of conveyance alone; for when the Israelites had been reluctantly permitted to depart for Mount Sinai, and seemed to be entangled in the land and shut in by the wilderness, Pharaoh pur-

* Wilkinson, i., 386, B.C. 1530.

† Gen. xlv., 19-21; xlv., 29.

† Gen. xli., 43.

§ Gen. l., 9.



The modern Arab Horse. (Job xxxiv., 19.)

sued after them with his six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt.* The "chariots of iron" possessed by "the inhabitants of the valley," which for a time successfully withstood the arms of Israel's hosts under Joshua, were in all probability similar to those long in use among other nations, being armed with scythe-like blades, firmly fixed in the axles.†

In the time of Saul, the Philistines were able to bring thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen against the Israelites in the level country.‡ The Syrians gathered together thirty-two thousand chariots, in the hope of being able to prevail against King David.§

To these engines of war, both chariots and cavalry, God allowed the Israelites to oppose "footmen" alone; for they, and their kings in particular, were prohibited from "multiplying horses to themselves."¶ The object of this prohibition was to prevent the people from having relations with Egypt, and thus relapsing into idolatry, which very thing occurred in the days of Solomon.¶ It was, moreover, the divine purpose to isolate the Israelites from all their idolatrous neighbors, to maintain the liberal institutions established by Joshua, and to prevent the formation of a standing army, which would at once destroy their own liberty and foster the love of foreign conquest; for it is worthy of note that the standing armies of ancient times mainly consisted of chariots and cavalry, the foot-soldiers being, as now, a sort of militia, drafted from the common people only on occasion of a warlike expedition. King David was the first of the Hebrews to adopt the chariot as an instrument of warfare,** and King Solomon, in accordance, doubtless, with an already established custom, still extant throughout the East, by which cities and provinces are made responsible for specific armaments in war, imposed on certain cities the duty of holding fourteen hundred war-chariots in readiness against his call.†† During this reign chariots and horses were imported from Egypt, both for the use of the Hebrews, "and for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria." The price of a

* Exod. xiv., 3-7.

† 1 Sam. xiii., 5.

‡ Deut. xvii., 16.

** 2 Sam. viii., 4.

† Josh. xvii., 16, 18; Judg. i., 19.

§ 1 Chron. xix., 7.

¶ 1 Kings x., 28, 29; xi., 7-10.

†† 1 Kings ix., 19; x., 25.

chariot with a span of horses, and an extra one (according to the custom of that day), was six hundred shekels, or one hundred and fifty for each of the three horses, and the same for the chariot.* This is equivalent to about £18 10s., or \$93 per horse; a high price, compared with modern times, especially if we consider that money was worth three or four times as much then as at present.

From the time of David and Solomon the Hebrews employed these engines of war in common with their enemies, the Assyrians and Babylonians, the pictorial representations of whose horses and chariots have been so remarkably preserved in the monuments of Nimrood and Koyoonjik throughout Western Asia.†

How shall we account for the total disappearance of the war-chariot and the convenient carriage, once so common in these lands? Civilization has moved westward and northward, and has been utterly crushed and destroyed in Western Asia by the barbarous tribes which have issued forth from the Arabian peninsula and the great plains of Tartary. They have ruined the palace and the temple, have gorged themselves with the accumulated treasures of centuries of prosperity, and have settled down into the barbarism whence they originated, adopting such of the customs and comforts of civilization as happened to suit their fancy.‡

The word "carriage," both in the singular and in the plural, is sometimes employed in a peculiar sense in our English version of the Bible. It means whatever is *carried* by a traveler, *i. e.*, baggage, as is evident from the context of some of the passages in which it occurs. Thus, in Judg. xviii., 20, 21, the word *carriage* evidently refers to the baggage of the Danites; 1 Sam. xvii., 22, also contains the word, evidently referring to the presents brought by young David from his father Jesse for his elder brothers and their captain; while in Acts xxi., 15, we find the same mode of expression which is used at the present day in speaking of loading beasts of burden with the baggage, when starting on a journey: "We took up our carriages," *i. e.*, our baggage—the very language still in use.

It is impossible to ascertain in what country originated the

* 1 Kings x., 29.

† Acts viii., 28.

‡ Mic. v., 10; Zech. ix., 10.

noble and useful animal which has now become naturalized in all portions of the habitable globe.* We have already mentioned that the horse does not appear to have existed in Egypt before the definite historic period, nor would it seem that he was employed by man in the neighboring countries during prehistoric times; for the monument of Euyuk, and other remains in Asia Minor and Syria, generally attributed to the Egyptians under Sesostris, contain no figure of a horse, though they represent cattle and goats. The earliest mention of this animal in any historic record is found in the Scriptural account of Joseph's elevation to power in Egypt.† As no ancient author, sacred or profane, makes any mention of the horse in his wild state, it would appear that this noble animal originated near the cradle of the human race and within narrowly circumscribed limits, and that he was early brought into a state of domesticity. He is now found wild, or partly so, in the plains of Tartary, in North and South America, and on such of the deltas of Asia Minor as are covered with forests and almost inaccessible swamps; and we know that in each of these instances the wild horse originated from the domestic stock.

There is perhaps no part of the world in which horses are more numerous, and useful to all classes of the population, than in Western Asia. Though evidently intended by nature to live on the plain, the horse now seems quite at home climbing the steepest mountain declivities, whether bearing heavy goods, or carrying the traveler or the warrior. The common horse is an extremely hardy animal, usually worked to the utmost limit of his strength, and scantily fed on straw and barley. This animal, with the mule and the ass, does most of the burden-bearing of the country, the heaviest loads being conveyed on camels and buffalo-carts; but though sturdy, and most useful, it is much neglected, and does not receive the attention it deserves. The finer races of horses, however, are thoroughly appreciated, and well cared for. They are chiefly used for purposes of warfare, whether in predatory expeditions or the cavalry service; and it is in such circumstances that the most remarkable qualities of the animal are best displayed. The description of the war-horse contained in the book of Job is the

* Bruce, v., 284.

† Gen. xli., 43.

finest ever written, as applicable to the war-horse of Western Asia and North Africa. "Hast thou given the horse strength?" No one can look upon the Arabian thorough-bred, whose diaphanous skin and coat of silken hair reveal the form of every muscle and vein of his body—no one who has witnessed his lightning speed, seen him leap like a gazelle, or suddenly stop in the midst of his career, can fail to pronounce him the image of strength and power. "Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?" a true picture of the horse's mane floating in the breeze, while he champs the bit and neighs, impatient of restraint. "Canst thou make him *afraid*," when he bounds "as a grasshopper?" "He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength," admirably represents the impatience of the war-horse as he sees the valley spread out before him, and pants to display his strength and agility. "He goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword." "The quiver" (quiverful of arrows) "rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

It is a well-known fact that, though horses unaccustomed to the sight of elephants and camels have fled before these animals when they first saw them, yet they have speedily overcome this natural fear; and the common cavalry-horse has been so greatly excited by the sound of war that he has repeatedly been known, when losing his rider, to dash without him upon the enemy, and to fight on alone.

There are other beautiful passages also in the poetic writings of the Bible as applicable to the modern war-horse of Turkey as Job xxxix., 19–25. Such are, for instance, Psa. cxlvii., 10; Prov. xxi., 31; Jer. iv., 13; viii., 6; and Hab. i., 8.

It is worthy of note that, as the modern horse is chiefly prized in connection with warfare and predatory expeditions, so also the Bible refers to the noble animal almost wholly in a similar sense; and as it was in ancient times, so at the present day different portions of the country are celebrated for the peculiar qualities of their breeds of horses. The Circassians are noted for the skill with which they manage their small mountain



Koordish and Koordish Cavalry.

horse, and the Russian troops have often had occasion to admire the quality of their steeds. They indeed employ the evolutions of their horses as a system of telegraphy, by which they are able to communicate to the mountaineers beyond the reach of their voices the orders of their chiefs, or the movements of their enemies. We have known one of their chieftains to shoot a crow on the wing with his rifle, while galloping at full speed.

The Cappadocian and Galatian horses are the most highly esteemed of the peninsula, and were equally so under the Roman dominion. But the Koordish is the most hardy, and best able to endure the rough usage of the lawless mountaineers, who, under the name of Koords, are the terror of the populations occupying the country from Cæsarea to Ooroomia, and from Trebizond to Aleppo. These men are celebrated for their equestrian skill; and whenever they appear at any of those tournaments called "the jerid," of which the indolent Turks are fast abandoning the practice, and which occur on occasions of special festivities and at annual fairs, they are almost sure to win the honors of the day. It is truly marvelous to see the facility with which the Koordish horse obeys the slightest wish of his master, suddenly darting forward at full speed, stopping instantly in his career, wheeling to the right or the left, until he is white with foam, his mouth bleeding, and his flanks lacerated by the heavy stirrups, while the brawny arm of his expert rider hurls the blunt javelin with astonishing force and unerring aim, and he leans forward almost out of sight to the right or left of the horse, in order to avoid the weapon of his antagonist. The Koordish robber is armed, like the ancients, with a shield, javelin, sword, and a long spear ornamented with a tuft of wool.

The Koordish horse has made his rider from time immemorial the undisputed master of Koordistan, and the terror of all the neighboring countries. The Koords are probably the descendants of the fierce Carducians, who impeded the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks under the leadership of Xenophon, from the plains of Mesopotamia to Trebizond, on the Black Sea. It will also be noticed that the country they occupy is a portion of what has, from time immemorial, been called Armenia, a land celebrated for its horses. Strabo says that it pro-

duced great quantities of horses, which were as highly esteemed as those of the celebrated Nesæan breed.* The Koords are the people referred to under the name of Togarmah, the common ancestor of that nation and of the Armenians.† Since those days, the Koords have left their mark on the pages of history, alternately as highway robbers and as soldiers of fortune—ever ready to offer their swords to the highest bidder. They have thus played a conspicuous part in the history of Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine. In Egypt the Koordish cavalry was the right arm of the Fatimite caliphs, after whose downfall some of its most fortunate chiefs even occupied the throne.

The Persian horse is also highly esteemed in the East, and there are no better horsemen anywhere than the Persians of the present day. The word *soos* in the Hebrew Scripture is generally supposed to designate a carriage-horse, and some critics have claimed that the word must have been derived from Susa,‡ capital of the kingdom of Elam, a portion of the present territory of Persia, lying to the south-east of Babylon. This etymology is liable to serious objections. Susa could more easily be derived from *soos* than the latter from the former; it is, however, probable that the two words have no connection with each other. But the Hebrew name for a saddle-horse is *parash* (*faras* in Arabic), supposed by many to be derived from Pares (Persia). Should this etymology be correct, it would indicate that the first horses the Hebrews saw had come from Persia. This may have been at the time that Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and the kings under his command, made an incursion into the land of Canaan, and were overthrown by Abraham and his servants.§ This is further confirmed by the fact that large numbers of horses were anciently reared in that portion of Persia which was called Media, now Azerbaijan, and, according to Polybius, x., 27, § 2, were thence “sent to all parts of Asia.” Their great superiority to the Greek horses was fully proved during Xerxes’s invasion of Greece.|| Diodorus Siculus states that the great horse-pastures near Bagistun nourished one hundred thousand horses, and that Media paid

* “Geography,” bk. xi., chap. xiv., § 9.

† Gen. x., 3; Ezek. xxvii., 14.

‡ Or Shushan (Esth. iii., 15).

§ Gen. xiv., 1-16.

|| Gillies’s “Ancient Greece,” p. 233.

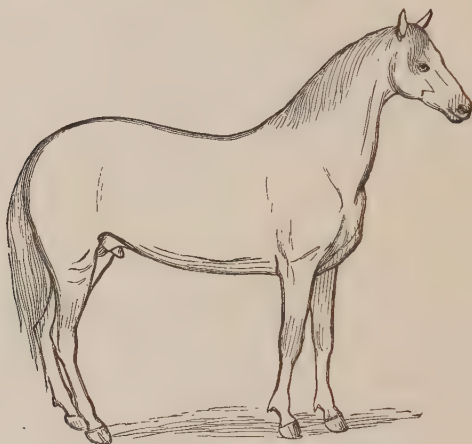
to the King of Persia a tribute of three thousand horses a year. However this may be, excellent horses now abound in the level tracts of Persia, and are particularly remarkable for their great powers of endurance. Some of them have repeatedly been known to travel under the saddle nearly two hundred miles in three consecutive days.* These animals are there raised in large numbers by the nomadic tribes who rule the country, numbering from seven hundred thousand to eight hundred thousand souls, whose cavalry forms the flower of the Persian army. The Shah himself belongs to a family of these nomads.

In ancient times it is supposed that the finest horses came from Persia, from a district called Nesæa by the Greek writers. There is a fine picture of a horse still preserved among the sculptures of Persepolis, which we reproduce on the following page, for the purpose of comparing it with the most highly esteemed modern horses, and particularly with the sketch of an Arab horse on the same page. The latter was drawn from a fine specimen, and brings out to view some of the characteristics of the breed. The comparison of the two would seem to indicate that the Persepolitan horse is a pure Arab; for they both have the tail set very low, and the mouth small, and the forehead well developed about the eyes. They are also tall in the hind-quarters. The sculptures of the ancients represent several of the paces of the horse, such as the trot, the canter, the leap, etc.; but this Persepolitan work is the only one we remember which represents the *amble*, a favorite pace in the East; and he is formed after the most approved model for that movement, *i. e.*, thick-set. Again, the mode of tying up the tail is prevalent among the moderns, who always do it to a valuable animal; and the same may be said of the bell around the neck, which is referred to in Zech. xiv., 20.

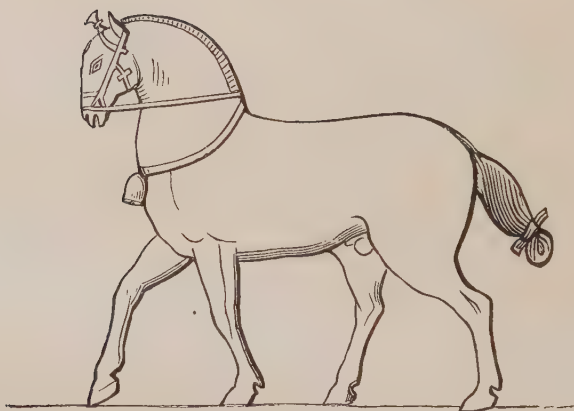
It has already been stated that the horse was introduced into Egypt from some foreign country, most probably by the shepherd-kings, whose successful invasion occurred just before the time of Joseph, and whose dominion extended over several centuries. But though of foreign origin, this animal could not fail to succeed in a land to which he was so well adapted, and

* Morier, ii., 359.

whose proverbial fertility offered him the best sustenance. The chariots of Egypt, and its numerous and effective cavalry, were the dread of the Israelites.* The Pharaohs, however, until the defeat of Pharaoh-necho by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish,



The Modern Arab Horse.



Sculptured Horse at Persepolis. (Zech. xiv., 20.)

usually pursued a friendly policy toward the Hebrews, and the latter were much inclined to seek their alliance, and the aid of their military power. Since the commencement of the Chris-

* Exod. xiv., 9; 2 Chron. xii., 2-4; 2 Chron. xxxv., 20-24; comp. Jer. xlvi., 2-4.

tian era, and particularly since the appearance of Mohammed, the cavalry of Egypt has always been celebrated for its valor and dash in the battle-fields of the Saracenic warriors, from the plains of Persia to those of Spain. It has ever constituted the principal force of the Egyptian monarchs, but acquired its greatest fame under the noted name of the "Mamelukes," who were mostly Circassian slaves, purchased by the successive governors of Egypt, with whom they shared its wealth and emoluments. It is unnecessary to describe "the Battle of the Pyramids," where they were conquered by the tactics of modern discipline and military science. They were revived again after the flight of Bonaparte, and maintained their power until Mohammed Ali put a final end to their existence. This wily ruler, being determined to share with no one the ownership and plunder of the "garden of the earth," invited the whole body of the Mamelukes, under some attractive pretense, to meet in the Castle of Cairo. They accepted the invitation, and when all had assembled within the ample area, the gates were closed, and the newly disciplined troops of Mohammed Ali were led in, and ordered to shoot down the unsuspecting beys and their numerous retainers. They were all butchered without mercy, one alone escaping, saved by the intelligence of his noble horse, which climbed the battlements and leaped down the high wall, losing his own life, but saving his master. This was the last of the Mamelukes, and he was alive at Constantinople some twenty years ago.

The finest race of horses is universally acknowledged to be the Arabian. This is probably owing, not so much to the climate, as to the early training and peculiar use of this animal by the Arabs of the desert. The young colt has free admittance to his master's tent, and is treated like one of the family. The Arab is as careful to preserve the pedigree of his horse, as the Jews were that of their tribes, and the documents which he hoards in proof are written and sealed by sheikhs of the highest authority. The colt is the playmate of the children until old enough to carry them on its back, when it is ridden without saddle or bridle, and guided by the mere voice or hand of its master. Every Arab is ambitious of acquiring ownership in a blood-mare; it often happens that several persons are part owners of a single animal, and may thus become sole possessors

of the progeny for a small sum. The cost of keeping is insignificant, for the horses eat grass during all the year, unless they are fed on barley and straw which has been stolen in a foray.

Every tribe of the Arabian peninsula possesses horses of valuable breeds, but that of the Nejd is most highly esteemed; and particularly a breed which is characterized by prominence of the forehead between the eyes, and noted for its remarkable intelligence. Nothing will induce the Arabs to part with their best mares; not only because they desire to preserve the breed, but from the fact that, in their frequent marauding expeditions by night, they can rely upon their silence, to say nothing of their superior intelligence. The Arabs often relate the story of an Englishman, who, being determined to acquire the most highly esteemed mare in the whole peninsula, was led by his inquiries to the tent of a man clothed in rags. The unanimous verdict of all the Arabians had declared him to be the owner of the finest mare in existence. The Englishman vainly offered fabulous sums of money for the beautiful creature, when the Arab, to put an end to the interview, declared that he would not part with her even if he brought to his tent ten camel-loads of gold sequins. When Mohammed Ali conquered the Wahabies, he offered £1800 to £2000 (\$10,000) to Arabs of the desert for single mares, but their owners utterly refused to part with them; yet the price of an ordinary blood-mare is £60, or \$300. We have repeatedly asked these people what made them prize their horses so highly, and they uniformly answered, "A fleet and intelligent horse is every thing to us. He who possesses the best is king of the desert. If your enemy is mounted on a fleeter horse than yourself, of what use is untold wealth to you? Your life and property are in his hands. With such a horse caravans are arrested and brought to your tent," etc.* The gun is almost unknown in the desert, and success depends upon the speed of the horse, his power of endurance, and the skillful management of the long, tufted spear, the sword, and the shield, which are still the trusty weapons of the lawless Ishmaelites; and these qualities are possessed by the Arab horse to a degree unsurpassed by any other. The Persians, who are the best riders in the world, as of old, as

* Job i., 17.

members of the Parthian empire, esteem the pure Nejd (Arab) as superior to all others, and detect him by the following rule: He must be made to travel fast over ninety miles at one stretch, then dashed into a stream up to his breast, and fed immediately with barley; if he eats it with a good appetite, he is all that can be desired.*

There is no end of the anecdotes related among the Arabs and by their neighbors, to illustrate the sagacity of this remarkable animal and his devotion to his master. A friend once told us that, in a town of Northern Syria, the pasha, while entertaining an Arab chieftain, expressed doubt as to the superior qualities of the mare he rode; the Arab challenged twenty of the pasha's best horsemen to lay hold of him within the limits of the public meïdan, or square. They attempted it, and failed.

The following seems to be well accredited: An Arab, having been captured by a predatory party, was at night-fall thrown upon the ground, with his hands firmly tied behind his back. His captors laid themselves down around him, and were soon sound asleep. His mare had been tied near by: about the middle of the night she tore her fastenings, stole up to her master, and, lifting him up with her teeth, succeeded in seating him on her back; she then darted off, and fled home with such speed and perseverance, that she died of exhaustion soon after safely depositing her master in his tent.

The Druses of Mount Lebanon and the Hauran possess a breed of the Arab horse distinguished for its superior strength and power of endurance, doubtless acquired among the rugged mountains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. The sheikhs, moreover, and the Druse nobles are so constantly in the saddle, and so devoted to the manly game of the jerid, that they may well be reckoned among the best riders in the world. The residence, or palace, of every sheikh or noted chieftain has a level space, or meïdan, in front of it, some eighty yards by forty, which is devoted to this exercise. Here, on festive occasions, guests arrive mounted on their finest steeds, dressed in the gayest costumes, and each armed with several blunt javelins or stout sticks about an inch in diameter, and a yard and a half in length, rounded at both ends; this is the jerid. Soon they may

* Chardin, v., 175.

be seen trying the paces of their horses, backward and forward. The riders then divide into two equal parties of a dozen at most, which stand opposed to each other at either extremity of the meïdan. The animals paw the ground, and display the greatest impatience to begin the sport, for their blood is up. A horseman from one of the parties now advances at a sharp canter, slightly reclining back in the saddle, the right arm extended and drawn down to a little below the level of the waist, with the jerid well balanced in the hand, which grasps it by the middle, the clasped fingers being uppermost. After traversing two-thirds of the meïdan, he suddenly turns, wheels his horse round to the left without sensibly checking his speed, and delivers his jerid with full force among the horsemen opposed to him. The weapon, thus obtaining impulse not only from the muscular strength of the rider's arm, but from the impetus of the animal in the sweeping course which it is made to perform, parts like a stone from a sling. The moment the horseman has delivered his jerid, he puts his horse into full gallop to return to his own side, pursued by one of the opposing party, who darts out after him, and, choosing his time and distance, hurls his jerid at his back. The former either avoids the blow by stooping down in his saddle, or, if expert enough, parries, and sometimes catches, his adversary's weapon in his left hand. In this manner the whole, who take part in the meïdan, are successively engaged until the *mêlée* becomes general, constant, and exciting. Footmen are present, who pick up and supply the riders with the jerids. Severe and indeed injurious blows are sometimes exchanged. The Druse sheiks will often get so ruffled in temper as to throw away the jerid, draw their swords, and begin to fight with each other in downright earnest; and it is only the prompt interposition of the by-standers which on such occasions prevents bloodshed.

Each game, or meïdan, as it is called, lasts from two to three hours, at the expiration of which time both riders and horses are ready to drop from exhaustion.

The Mamelukes of Egypt were also celebrated for their skill in these manly games; yet it is related that the Druse sheikh Ali Amad, esteemed in his day the best horseman in Syria, was once present at a meïdan performed in Cairo before the viceroy, Mohammed Ali Pasha, where the pasha's favorite black

eunuch was the terror of all combatants, from the skillful and merciless manner in which he handled his jerid. The pasha taunted Ali Amad with his reputation as a first-rate horseman, and challenged him to enter the lists with his eunuch. The sheikh at once accepted the defiance, but first obtained the pasha's solemn assurance that he should not be held responsible for any consequences that might ensue. After one or two passes, the sheikh parried the eunuch's well-delivered weapon, pursued him in his retreat, and drove his jerid (which, however, it must be observed, he had privately pointed) with such force that it entered the eunuch's back between the shoulders and came out at his breast. Mohammed Ali, faithful to his word, took not the least notice of the fatal occurrence.* This incident may serve to illustrate the power of the javelin and the spear in the hands of the ancients.†

Western travelers in the East often notice the fact that the women never ride sideways, as with us, but astride like the men. It has generally been supposed that the custom now prevailing among ourselves dates back only to the Middle Ages, or even later. But this appears to be a mistake; for there are several representations of women riding sideways upon Etruscan vases older than the founding of Rome (B.C. 752), showing that the custom prevailed in Italy in those early days. One of these pictures is here given, on account of the singularity of the fact. We also reproduce on the following page a picture of two Assyrian women riding astride upon a mule. The former may now be seen in the museum of Naples,‡ and the latter is taken from Rawlinson.§



Woman riding sideways. From a Vase found at Ruvo, in Italy.

The trappings of the horses appear scarcely to have changed in any respect from the earliest times to the present, if we may

* Churchill's "Mount Lebanon," vol. ii., p. 282.

† 2 Sam. ii., 23; 1 Chron. xi., 20.

‡ Gargiulo's Collection, iv., pl. 48.

§ "Five Monarchies," iii., 233.

judge from the sculptures so remarkably preserved at Nineveh and in Egypt. The very form of the bit and bridle is the same now as then.*

The Bedawin, the Circassians, and the Tartars never shoe their horses, and such seems to have been the case anciently.† Each country, too, has its own style of saddle, which, when introduced elsewhere, is used only exceptionally, and bears a name indicative of its origin. The "Egyptian saddle" is known in all parts of Western Asia, and so is the "Turkish;" both the *riding* and the *pack* saddle of several districts differ materially from one another.



Assyrian Women riding astride on a Mule. (Isa. lxvi., 20.)

The mule is held in high estimation throughout the East. It is greatly preferred to the horse as a beast of burden, on account of its sure-footedness, its ability to carry heavier loads, and the economy of its keeping, requiring but a quarter as much barley as the horse. It can not be purchased for less than four times the value of a common horse. The white mule is rare, and its price very high. This animal appears to have been known to the ancients nearly as early as the horse, for, as we have already stated, it is represented on the ancient monuments of Egypt.

The earliest mention of the mule, according to our version of the Bible, is found in Gen. xxxvi., 24, which some commen-

* 2 Kings xxxix., 28; Psa. xii., 9; Isa. xxx., 28. † Isa. v., 28.

tators have supposed to be a commemoration of the first discovery of the mule in a wild state. But the translation appears to be incorrect. The best authorities render the word, here translated "mules," by "*hot springs*." This would be deemed even now an important discovery, and worthy of record.

The Israelites, until the time of David, would seem to have possessed very few horses or mules. The latter came all at once into fashion during this reign, for the king and all the royal princes rode upon mules.*

We have, at different times during a long residence in Turkey, seen the mule adopted by the *grandeos* of some city, so that for several consecutive years none of the chief men of the place were seen riding on horses; yet the latter is usually preferred, and this seems to have been the case among the Hebrews after David's time. From this period the mule is incidentally mentioned as in use in the land of Israel together with the horse, as was the case in neighboring countries.†

Absalom appears to have ridden his sumpter-mule while accompanying the expedition against his father.‡

The mules now most highly prized, on account of their superior size and strength, are those of Mesopotamia; such, at least, is their nominal origin; but being brought, many of them, from the regions of Harpoot and Mardin, they appear to be bred in the same locality as furnished those of Togarmah in ancient times.§ It is probable that to this breed belonged the two hundred and forty-five mules which the impoverished remnant of Israel had with them on their return from Babylon to the ruins of Jerusalem.||

In order, however, fully to appreciate the value of the mule, we must consider that most of the internal trade in a large portion of Western Asia, as well as nearly all the traveling, is done by means of this animal. On the most frequented thoroughfares there are companies of three, four, or a dozen loaded animals almost constantly passing to and fro; but wherever the road is a little isolated, and especially where reports are circulating that Zeïbek, Koordish, or Bedawy robbers have appeared on the road, the travelers and muleteers wait for one another.

* 2 Sam. xiii., 29; 1 Kings i., 33.

† 1 Kings xviii., 5; Ezra ii., 66.

‡ 2 Sam. xviii., 9.

§ Ezek. xxvii., 14.

|| Neh. vii., 68.

er, and keep together for mutual protection. Thus a caravan is formed, and though it contains horses and asses, yet the mules predominate, and are the most reliable. So it must have been in Bible times.* In these caravans and ordinary traveling companies may be seen a mingling of riders upon horses, traders perched on the top of their goods, children riding in large baskets—a pair of which is slung across the back of an animal—and women in “maffas.” These last consist of two low, open boxes, three feet long and a foot and a half wide, cushioned within, and fastened on the sides of the pack-saddle of a powerful mule; two women are seated in them, while a light awning protects them above. Persons of wealth and rank, when journeying, often ride, either themselves or their families, in a “litter,” or takhtravan, probably referred to in



Eastern Litter.

Isaiah lxvi., 20, and which corresponds to the palankeen of India, the traveler reclining on a mattress and cushions. It was doubtless such a litter that carried the children of Darius,† for it is used in Persia to this day for the conveyance of women, children, and the sick. In the “Arabian Nights,” King Zahr is said to have prepared for the journey of his daughter a “litter” (takhtravan), covered with red cloth (still the universal custom), adorned with pearls and jewels, together with ten mules, to bear it in turn (two at a time). This vehicle is similar to an oblong box, or the body of a carriage, with a latticed door at

* 2 Kings v., 17; 1 Chron. xii., 40.

† Quintius Curtius, lib. iii., cap. iii.

each side, and usually covered with crimson cloth; it is set and firmly fastened upon the middle of two long parallel poles or shafts, whose extremities are attached to the pack-saddles of the front and hind mule. Such a vehicle seems to be denoted by the word translated "chariot" in Cant. iii., 9. It occurs nowhere else in the Bible, and its literal meaning is "moving couch"—precisely the signification of the modern word "takhtravan."

The men who own the animals engaged in thus transporting travelers and goods are hardy, and usually form the entire male population of particular villages. Though their animals are not mules alone, but pack-horses and asses also, yet the former beasts are so much more highly valued for this purpose that these men are called *muleteers* in all the languages of the East. It is their great ambition to adorn all their animals about the neck, head, and haunches with broad bands of leather, carefully embroidered with coarse beads, shells, or colored wool; sometimes a sentence is worked upon the bands, and numerous bells of various size and tone are fastened upon them.* The object of these bells is twofold: should a mule stray from his companions, their sound enables his master to trace and secure him; and when entering the narrow streets of a market-town or village, the jingling of a hundred bells is not only a gratification to the muleteer's pride, but also serves as a warning against the mischief often done by his headstrong animals, as they go crashing against the shops or the luckless passer-by, for which he would otherwise be called to account. The inscription "upon the bells of the horses," "Holiness unto the Lord," spoken of by Zechariah, seems to us aptly illustrated by the above-named custom, and the meaning appears to be that the very trade and common business of the people would, in the fulfillment of prophecy, be consecrated to the Lord. All the more forcible will this language appear if we bear in mind that the muleteer of Western Asia is notorious for his profaneness and coarse brutality, and is often guilty of highway robbery and murder.

The ass was, probably, one of the first animals brought into subjection to the will of man, and made to share his toils. History mentions him as early as Abraham's time;† and the

* Zech. xiv., 20.

† Gen. xxii., 3.

wealth of the patriarchs, Abraham and Job, is said to have consisted in flocks, cattle, camels, and asses, no mention being made of the horse, which seems to have been, at that early period, unknown to the people of Canaan.

The natural docility and gentleness of this useful animal must have rendered his domestication an easy task, while the extreme economy of his keeping, and his powers of endurance, eminently fit him to be the poor man's servant.

The frequent allusions to the wild ass in the Old Testament make it evident that this animal was once common in all parts of Western Asia, though he is now confined to Arabia and Persia. We once saw a beautiful specimen, which was being conveyed by our friend Mr. Barker, of Aleppo, to the British Zoological Gardens, but never reached its destination, having died at Sinope, on the Black Sea. It was young, and had been caught but a little while before, yet it was gentle and tame. Its color was a reddish fawn, white underneath, with a dark line along the mane and back to the tail, crossed by a short line on the shoulders. This shows the fitness of the Hebrew name "khamor," signifying *red*, which is given to the ass in Gen. xlix., 14, and some other passages. A similar name, with like import, is also found in the Arabic, as well as the Greek, Latin, Spanish, and French languages.

The disappearance of the wild ass from its former haunts is doubtless to be attributed to its being hunted down for its flesh, which was highly esteemed by the Greeks and the Romans, and which, though it was forbidden to the Jews, was probably eaten by their neighbors. It was, also, reduced to a state of domesticity, as is still the practice in Persia. The ancient kings of Nineveh hunted the animal as a pastime; so do the Persian nobility of our day. Olearius states that he saw no fewer than thirty-two wild asses slain in one day by the Shah of Persia and his court, the bodies of which were sent to the royal kitchens at Ispahan.* The fleetness of this animal, however, is such that no mounted horseman can hope to overtake it, and the only successful modes of hunting it are by means of hounds, or of relays which successively take up the chase as the game passes by, as described by Xenophon.†

* "Travels," p. 735.

† "Anabasis," lib. i., cap. v.

Among the Assyrian sculptures there are many representing the hunting of the wild ass. The annexed is taken from Koyoonjik.

The descriptions given of this animal in its wild haunts correspond with the allusions contained in the book of Job,



Ass Colt pursued by a Hound. (Job xxxix., 5.)

and the Hebrew prophets. "Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?"* All the beasts of the field bray, neigh, or bellow, as the expression of a want or a desire. "Who hath sent out the wild ass free?"† This and the context assert the original wild state, not only of the ass, but of all the brute creation, which is amply sustained by the science of natural history. "The wild asses quench their thirst"‡ are words which can be appreciated only in South-western Asia, and some portions of Africa, where the long summer drought leaves the land parched and dry; the "beasts of the field" boldly advance by night to the neighborhood of man's habitations to slake their burning thirst, and rejoice at the early autumn rains that replenish "the springs in the valleys which run among the hills."§ "A wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure."|| The deer, the gazelle, and other wild animals, which we have repeatedly met in the plains and on the hills of Syria and Asia Minor, are spirited creatures, and constantly "snuff up the wind" as they go; their scent is even keener than their sight, and they travel against the wind, the more surely to detect a lurking foe; and this is evidently the case with the wild ass, an animal as fleet and wary as any of them.

The domestic ass is probably more numerous in the lands of the Bible than any other beast engaged in the service of man.

* Job vi., 5.

§ Jer. xiv., 4-6.

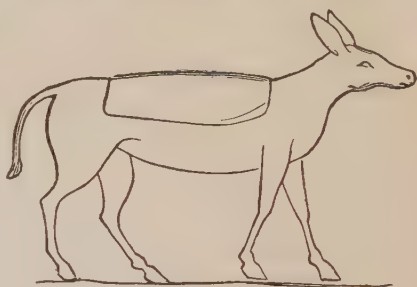
† Job xxxix., 5.

|| Jer. ii., 24.

‡ Psa. civ., 11.

It can be procured for so small a price, and kept at so trifling a cost in all the rural districts, that no one, however poor, need do without it. We have known a tolerably good donkey, in the interior of the country, to be sold for a single dollar, and we could name a man who rode his faithful beast a week's journey for the purpose of selling it at a sea-port town, and, having disposed of it for four dollars, trudged home on foot, quite satisfied with his bargain.

The ass appears to have been as common in ancient times as it is now, for even in the days of Job the wicked man is described as "driving away the ass of the fatherless."*. The sculptures of Beni-Hassan, in Egypt, contain a very good representation of the domesticated ass, carrying a saddle of the kind which goes all over the East by the name of the "Egyptian saddle."



Ass with "Egyptian Saddle." From Beni-Hassan. (1 Kings xlii., 13.)

The patriarch Job, in his later prosperity, owned no less than one thousand she-asses;† and, as a further evidence of the general use of this animal in early times, we may notice that in the neighboring country of Midian the conquering Israelites captured no less than sixty-one thousand asses.‡ Further, when Moses indignantly repelled the charges of the rebellious Dathan and Abiram, he declared that he had taken nothing from them, not even an ass.§ Samuel, the prophet, testifying his integrity, challenged the entire people of Israel to witness against him whose ass he had taken;|| and it is at once an evidence how common was this animal, and to what great depths of poverty the remnant of the captive Hebrews were reduced, that, on their return from Babylon to Jerusalem, forty-and-two thousand three hundred and three-score souls of them brought but seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five mules, four hundred and thirty-five

* Job xxiv., 3.

§ Numb. xvi., 15.

† Job xlii., 12.

|| 1 Sam. xii., 3.

‡ Numb. xxxi., 33.

camels, yet as many as six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses, which, by-the-way, is about one ass to each household; indeed there were but eight thousand one hundred and thirty-six animals, all told; so that four out of five of the returning captives performed the entire journey on foot, as is done by the very poor at the present day.* But the strongest evidence that this animal was extremely common among the Hebrews is contained in the references made to him in the Mosaic legislation. He is, doubtless, included in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, under the word cattle, and is distinctly mentioned in the tenth;† and Moses certainly enjoined kindness to animals, when he commanded the Hebrew to assist even his enemy to raise his fallen ass, an operation which can be performed for a loaded animal only by lifting up the burden on both sides at once, unless it be unloaded and loaded again, implying much loss of time, and even this often can not be done without assistance.‡ We are happy to testify that at the present day this precept of Moses is generally obeyed in Western Asia, not simply by those who profess to venerate his name, but even by the tribes who do not acknowledge it. Jew and Christian, Muslim and Koord, mutually assist each other, though inimical to one another's faith. We must not, however, gather from these passages that this animal was so common among the Hebrews as not to be appreciated. The wealthy and powerful, as we shall show farther on, did not disdain to own and ride upon the ass; suffice it here to remind the reader that King David, in the plenitude of his power, deemed no mean portion of his substance to consist in his herds of asses, and appointed an officer as "ruler" over them.§

There is a great variety in the breeds of this animal. Some are as large as an ordinary mule, and, when confined for several days in the stable, they become restless, and almost incapable of control; indeed, their pugnacity is proverbial. Jacob, in his blessing, does not cast reproach upon Issachar by comparing him to an ass;|| he is the "strong, male, red ass"—for this is the meaning of the Hebrew here, and in Deut. xxii., 10—"couching down," rolling and feeding, in a rich pasture-land,

* Neh. vii., 66-69.

† Exod. xxiii., 5; Deut. xxii., 4.

|| Gen. xlix., 14.

† Exod. xx., 10, 17.

§ 1 Chron. xxvii., 30.

between two "hedge-rows;" it loves abundance and its own repose too well to seek for freedom, like the wild ass, upon the steep and rocky heights, and is willing often to "bear the burden." The position of the tribe of Issachar, in the fertile plain of Esdraelon, left them at the mercy of the conquering hordes, who made it their highway, while the rest of Israel were able to defend themselves in their mountain districts.*

A very fine ass is found in Cyprus, which will keep up with any horse on a journey; these cost two hundred dollars, and even more. The Egyptian donkey, also, is highly appreciated in all the surrounding countries. The finest breed of this animal is the white ass, more rare than the white mule, and generally brought from the region of Bagdad. It is a spirited creature, and commands as high a price as eight hundred or a thousand dollars. The best way to obtain a correct impression of the comparative numbers and usefulness to the people of Western Asia of their mules and asses, is to post one's self not far from the gate of an Eastern city, toward sunset on a fine summer's day. It is a season of the year when all who possess a country house leave the heated atmosphere of the city, and seek the purer air and cool shades of their orchards and gardens; and there is scarcely a man so poor as not to own a small vineyard, with a little hut of mud-bricks, where his wife and children are glad to take refuge during the summer months, while he goes every morning to his work in town, and returns to them at night. Take your seat on that rude little stool, or mat, offered you at the coffee-shop close by the roadside, beneath the shelter of a booth of green branches, and beside a sparkling fountain or a sluggish stream. The scene of this evening exodus to the inviting country is thoroughly Scriptural. The people, their dress, their very speech, so similar to the ancient Hebrew and Syriac; the beasts they ride, with the housings and trappings which adorn them—all this, and much more that could be noted, vividly illustrates the scenes enacted in the same localities more than three thousand years ago. Notice how few of these people are mounted on horses or mules; you see at least ten asses to one other animal. There goes an entire family—the mother, with a babe

* Judg. iv.

in her arms, astride the family donkey, and bright little faces peering out of the basket slung at each side, while the father follows on foot, one hand upon the crupper, and a stick in the other. Yonder two youngsters, riding the same donkey, dash along, vigorously belaboring the poor brute with their bare heels, and striking him incessantly with sticks, laughing and shouting at the top of their voices. Here comes a long line of loaded camels, following a diminutive ass almost hidden from sight by the loose garments and gaunt form of the camel-driver, whose feet, encased in oddly shaped boots of red morocco, drag upon the ground. After these comes the white turbaned *cadi*, or judge, mounted on a fine, ambling Egyptian donkey, leading a whole company of Muslim *grandeos*, similarly mounted, and followed by their pipe-bearers; they are the invited guests of the judge, going to spend the evening and night at his country-seat.

To the same extent was the ass used by the Israelites for riding and as a beast of burden; indeed, from the Exodus to the reign of King David, it must have been almost the only animal ridden by the Hebrews; for during this period the horse and the mule are not even mentioned as in use among them. The proud and mercenary Balaam went to meet the King of Moab, riding upon his ass.* The song of Deborah speaks of the judges of the land "that ride upon white asses."†‡ Jair the Gileadite, one of the judges of Israel, "had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass-colts.‡ Abdon the Pirathonite, also one of the judges, "had forty sons, and thirty nephews, that rode on three-score and ten ass-colts."§ We likewise repeatedly read of the women of old riding upon the ass, attended by a servant on foot, a most familiar sight at the present day in all parts of Western Asia and in Egypt.|| In such a case the servant performs the part of donkey-driver, making the animal go fast or slow, according to the wish of the rider. Often have we heard the words of the Shunamite, from the lips of ladies on somewhat similar occasions, "*Drive*, and go forward; slack not (the) riding for me, except I bid thee."¶ Zechariah's prophecy concerning the Messiah, who should

* Numb. xxii., 21, 22.

† Judg. v., 10.

‡ Judg. x., 4.

§ Judg. xii., 14.

|| Josh. xv., 18; 1 Sam. xxv., 23.

¶ 2 Kings iv., 24.

make his entry into Jerusalem "upon an ass," even "upon a colt, the foal of an ass,"* does not produce upon the Oriental mind that idea of abject poverty and humility which would be suggested to the Occidental. Had he come riding in a chariot, it would have been an emblem of earthly grandeur: had he rode upon a horse, he would have seemed a conqueror; his riding upon an ass only showed that he was gentle (πρᾶος),† and that the weapons of his warfare were persuasion and the diffusion of truth.‡



Bactrian Camel, seen in Asia Minor.

The camel is only incidentally mentioned in the Scriptures; yet enough is said of him to prove that he existed anciently in great numbers in the lands of the Bible, and that his useful qualities were fully appreciated by their inhabitants. We feel authorized, therefore, to conclude that he occupied as important a place in the life of those people as he does in the same countries at the present day, and that we may draw from our fuller acquaintance with the modern camel the materials with which to fill out the incomplete sketch of this animal contained in Holy Writ.

It was long supposed that there were two distinct species, called by some the Bactrian and the Arabian, and by others the camel and the dromedary. It is now, however, fully proved that the two varieties, properly denominated the Bac-

* Zech. ix., 9.

† Matt. xxi., 5.

‡ 2 Cor. x., 4.

trian and the Arabian, form but one and the same species. They, indeed, differ considerably in their appearance, though not more essentially than some varieties of the horse and dog. The Arabian camel stands higher on his feet, and has a shorter body; but the chief difference between them consists in the fact that the Bactrian has two humps, while the Arabian has but one. The former is a much more powerful animal, with a longer body, and heavy masses of hair about his neck, shoulders, and haunches; still they are only varieties of the same species; for the common camel of Asia Minor is a cross between the two, which has the general form of the Bactrian, yet possesses but one hump. Both varieties appear to have existed from time immemorial; for the Arabian is represented on the monuments of Nimrood; and Mr. Layard states that



Bactrian Camels. From the Nimrood Obelisk.

the Bactrian, figured on an obelisk in the same locality, appears to have been brought from a distant country:* the latter is also portrayed among the bass-reliefs of Shehel-minar; this agrees with the present *habitat* of the two varieties. The Bactrian occupies the great plains of Tartary and Central Asia, with Northern China and Southern Russia, regions to whose climate he is well adapted. He exists in a wild state only in some portions of Tartary, having been allowed to go free, as is supposed, according to a custom of the Kalmucks. The Arabian camel, on the other hand, is found in India, Persia, South-western Asia, and throughout Northern Africa, to the Senegal. It does not appear to have existed upon the latter continent as early as in Asia, if we may judge from the monuments of

* Layard, vol. ii., p. 324.

Egypt; it was, however, known there in Abraham's time, being enumerated among the presents bestowed by Pharaoh upon the patriarch.* Camels are found wild, it is said, in some of the desert tracts of Africa, having, not improbably, strayed from a state of domesticity.

The earliest historical mention of the animal refers to him as domesticated, and fully subjected to the will of man. A portion of Abraham's wealth consisted of camels; and Job, in the height of his prosperity, possessed six thousand of these animals.† The Arabian variety is the one referred to in the Scriptures, and to this, therefore, we shall confine our remarks.

There is no stronger evidence, in the entire range of the animal kingdom, than this creature affords of a wise and beneficent design toward mankind on the part of the Creator. Vast barren tracts extend in several directions from the cradle of our race, by which one would suppose mankind would have remained shut up within the boundaries of the land they originally occupied. It has often been remarked that the sea, which appears only a watery waste destined to separate the nations of the earth, has, on the contrary, proved the chief promoter of that commercial intercourse which has ever been one of the most powerful agents of civilization. The same, essentially, has been true of the land-wastes of Asia and Africa, despite the inroads of those pirates of the desert, the Chaldeans,‡ and the Ishmaelites, or modern Bedawin.§ Similar deserts exist in other parts of the world, but they were not connected with the early history of our race, and no such animal was provided to enable man to traverse their dreary wastes.

The fact that the Arabian camel has essentially the same name in all the countries where it is found, is a proof that this animal occupied at first a very circumscribed locality, and multiplied, as did man, from an original stock. The name *gamal*, in Hebrew and Arabic, which we have changed to camel, is supposed by Gesenius to have been derived from the word *hamal*, signifying *to bear a burden*—a porter, denoting the use to which this animal has ever been put by man.

A close examination of the peculiarities of form and temper of the camel can not fail to excite admiration at his wonderful

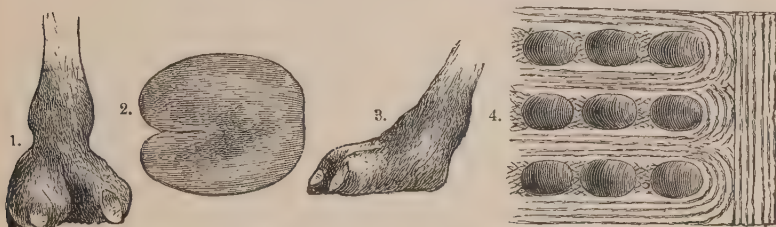
* Gen. xii., 16.

† Job xlii., 12.

‡ Job i., 17.

§ Gen. xvi., 12.

adaptation to the purpose for which he was evidently intended. Some people claim that he is very homely and uncouth. We believe this prejudice arises from the difficulty men experience in altering their standard of beauty. People of the East, who are accustomed to the sight of the camel, find nothing ungraceful either in his form or motion, but, on the contrary, consider him comely and majestic; and all must acknowledge that his figure adds not a little to the picturesque character of Oriental scenery. But what is worthy of our special attention is, the wonderful adaptation of means to an end, of which this animal is a living illustration. His foot is two-toed, with a powerful nail or claw on the extremity of each division, and its texture closely resembles that of the human foot. He is thus emi-



Foot and Stomach of the Camel: 1. Fore-foot, front; 2. Sole; 3. Hind-foot, side; 4. Structure of one of the Camel's four Stomachs.

nently adapted to tread the sands of the desert. When the ground is wet, on the other hand, and becomes slippery to the iron-shod horse, the great weight of the camel's foot presses away the mud, and, placing him in immediate contact with the solid earth, appears to adhere to it like the foot of a fly to the ceiling, or as a piece of wet leather which little boys press upon the flat surface of a stone, and are thereby enabled to lift heavy weights. This is the reason why the camel, like the llama of South America, is fitted to climb the steepest mountains. He is appropriately called the "ship of the desert," because he is able to travel the arid sandy plain, and, with equal ease, the most rugged and barren mountains, which the term "desert" also includes; and travelers uniformly testify to his sure-footedness, even on the roughest roads. Other parts of the camel equally command our attention. His scent is extremely keen, so that he quickly detects a lurking enemy, whether man or beast; and he has been known, when traveling in the des-

ert, to discover water hidden from the sight of his master, and, breaking his halter, to rush frantically toward it in order to slake his thirst. His nostrils, moreover, are so formed that he



Head of a Camel.

can close them at will, so as to exclude the finest particles of sand; were it not for this, a far greater number of these valuable animals would be destroyed by the "simoon," or hurricane of the desert, as much feared by those who wander upon the land waste as is the

typhoon by mariners in the China seas. The simoon seldom lasts more than fifteen or twenty minutes, though sometimes as much as two or three hours; it drives clouds of sand before it, and often buries whole caravans of men and animals. The camel instinctively knows its distant approach, and, uttering piteous cries, lies down with its back to the coming storm.* It has a blasting influence upon vegetation when it passes over cultivated regions, and so withers and burns the growing corn that no animal will touch a blade of it.† This is probably referred to in 2 Kings xix., 26. Indeed that part of the desert in which the simoon occurs is a wilderness of rock and sand, where one meets not the smallest trace or vestige of animal or vegetable life.‡ There is probably a reference to the ravages of the simoon in the account of the catastrophe which overtook the army of Sennacherib, when, on marching from Pelusium to attack Jerusalem, one hundred and eighty-five thousand men were destroyed in a single night; for, though Herodotus attributes it to another cause,§ yet the Scriptural account is much more distinct and probable.||

The camel's adaptation to traverse the desert is further shown by the small quantity of food he consumes, and the length of time he can abstain from water. In the desert, the Arabs wa-

* Job i., 19; Lane, "Modern Egyptians," i., Introd. 2; Bruce, "Travels," v., 223, 350.

† Morier, "Second Voyage," p. 43. ‡ Bruce, v., 351. § Lib. i.

|| 2 Kings xix., 35; Isa. xxxvii., 7; Jer. li., 1.

ter their flocks once in two days, and the camels once in three; while, in traveling, the latter easily go without drinking for nine, and even for fifteen days;* and, according to the African Arabs, all the way from the Niger across the Great Desert, a journey of no less than forty days.†

The Being who designed this animal for the desert has provided him with an extra stomach in which to carry his water, just as the ship-builder provides his ship with casks or tanks for the same purpose; and it is an undeniable fact that travelers have, when in distress, quenched their thirst by killing their camels. It is amazing how small an amount of food will sustain so large an animal. When traveling, they are fed only once in twenty-four hours; this is in the morning, during the summer, as they then travel by night. A dozen camels or so are made to stand in a circle, with their heads toward the centre, while their master sets a small quantity of barley in the midst, to which straw is often added.‡ When fed upon dates or beans, a cake made from these is tossed into the mouth of each one in turn, as they kneel upon the ground. The camel takes his rest crouching down upon his breast and leisurely chewing his cud, moving his jaw to and fro in a manner quite peculiar to himself. Besides his regular meal, this animal, as he journeys, snatches mouthfuls of thorny shrubs growing by the wayside, and browses upon thistles, which cover the entire surface of the desert, evidently preferring them to any other food.

The wonderful adaptation of the camel to the barren waste has led to its adoption by the inhabitant of the desert, as his chief companion and main-stay. Thus it has been from time immemorial. In the days of the Hebrew judges, B.C. 1256, the Midianites and "the children of the East" came up "as grasshoppers for multitude," with their tents and "camels without number," and for seven successive summers "destroyed the increase of the earth."§ The same is now done every year by the Bedawy Arabs, under the impotent government of Constantinople; and the remnants of the people are compelled, as of old, to live in "dens which are in the mountains, and in caves and strongholds."|| The Amalekites had many camels,¶

* Tavernier, p. 47.

§ Judg. vi., 1-6.

† Bruče, v., 368.

|| Judg. vi., 2.

‡ Gen. xxiv., 25.

¶ 1 Sam. xxvii., 8, 9.

and so had the Hagarites.* The Israelites themselves, who lived upon the borders of the desert, found this animal very serviceable. Camels were owned by Isaac,† by Jacob,‡ by many of the people in King David's time,§ and by David himself,|| and are often spoken of afterward, both in the Old and New Testaments, in a manner indicating that they continued to be familiarly known to the people of Palestine.¶ The present inhabitants of the same regions appear to value this animal quite as highly as their ancestors, for its numbers are not diminished. To give one illustration out of many, Thevenot speaks of a man by the name of Ali Bey, who, when he died, owned no less than "fourscore thousand camels, and about as many asses."**

But there is still another feature in the physical characteristics of this wonderful animal which pre-eminently marks him as designed for the service of man. Writers on this subject always speak of his hump as a reservoir of fat, which is drawn upon by the animal whenever kept on a low diet. Our observation, which has not been limited, does not accord with this opinion. We regard the camel's hump as his natural pack-saddle, intended to enable him to carry burdens for his master, man;†† and it would be difficult to conceive any better substance of which it might be composed. When remaining without work for any length of time, the camel's hump grows so high as to become pointed at the top, and to hang over on one side, as in our picture of a Bactrian camel, page 234; but his master usually takes care to keep it down by hard labor, so that it often almost disappears, just as would be the case with an artificial saddle which could not be spared long enough for needed repairs. It thus often happens that the poor overworked camel's back is covered with painful sores, plainly showing what would have been his plight were he not provided with a natural saddle; and such is often his condition, even with this provision, that the master is obliged to cut off with his knife considerable pieces of flesh in order to keep it from mortifying—an operation we have repeatedly witnessed. The following illustration will show the state of the hump of

* 1 Chron. v., 21.

† Gen. xxiv., 10.

‡ Gen. xxx., 43.

§ 1 Chron. xii., 40.

|| 1 Chron. xxvii., 30.

¶ Isa. lx., 6; Matt. xix., 24.

** Thevenot, 235.

†† Isa. xxx., 6.



Overworked Camel.

many a camel at the end of winter. The pack-saddle used for the camel is large, heavy, and supported by a wooden frame, whose cross-bars project at the top. It is often decorated with coarse glass beads, small white shells (*Cypræa aricia moneta*), and long woolen cords, with red or blue tassels hanging down on each side of the animal, which sway to and fro, as he walks, and help to keep off the flies. A bell is hung in front of the saddle, which gives notice when the wearer becomes separated from the line of his companions. The camel bells are among the most familiar Eastern sounds, occurring as they do in lands where are no church bells, and marking the solemn tread of the "ship of the desert," so unlike the incessant jingle of the mule bells. The same sound was familiar to the ancients; for in the antique sculptures camels are often represented with bells. Collars and bands of dyed wool, adorned with tassels and embroidered with shells and beads, often hang about the neck and head of favorite animals, while a showy ornament, with a looking-glass for a centre-piece, covers the entire forehead. They are also decked with long strings of little brass bells suspended from the saddle, or fastened to the head, legs, and even the tail. This is their holiday attire, and thus are they represented on the slabs of the

palaces of Nineveh, when brought as articles of tribute to the Assyrian kings.* The favorite camels of Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian, who were slain by the hand of Gideon, were ornamented in a similar but much more costly manner.†

A strong camel will often carry eight hundred and one thousand pounds' weight, but the ordinary load is about one hundred *rotles*, or six hundred pounds. When overloaded, he utters cries of distress or rage, and even attempts to bite; this is particularly the case when he is suffering from a sore back. He has the name of being vindictive, and has been repeatedly known to kill a man instantly by a kick in the breast. Usually, however, he is gentle, patient, and much-enduring; yet among the Turks his combative propensities are encouraged and excited, and there is perhaps as much pleasure enjoyed in camel-fighting as in bull-baiting and cock-fighting among people claiming a higher civilization. The *pekhliwans*, or wrestling camels, as they are called, have to be muzzled, for their bite at the throat of an antagonist is often fatal. Their struggle resembles a human wrestling-match till they resort to kicking; and the combat is ended by the flight of the vanquished.

In assuming a sitting posture, the camel first bends his fore-legs and falls upon his knees, and then gradually settles down, so that his breast lies square upon the ground. The points of his body on which he is supported, seven in number, are protected by callosities or thickening of the outer skin. The thickest of these is heart-shaped, and lies upon the breast, while the rest are situated near the joints. Some writers claim that this posture of the camel is a thing taught him by his master for his own convenience, and that these callosities have thus been produced. We are aware that the camel has to be trained to kneel down or rise up at the word of command, which word or signal is a guttural sound or prolonged *kh*;‡ but we have never seen a camel resting otherwise, whether old or young, not even the new-born foal; if, then, this habit be artificial, it has become a second nature, and needs no longer to be taught. The callosities of the camel may, in our opinion, be deemed an additional proof that his present sitting posture is one natural to him. The elephant, when in a domestic state,

* Layard, ii., p. 324.

† Judg. viii., 21, 26.

‡ Gen. xxiv., 11.

kneels down in a similar manner, but when wild he takes his rest leaning against a tree: he has no callosities in any part of his body.

In Bible times the camel was used, as at present, for conveying merchandise and as a beast of burden; there seem, indeed, to have been from the earliest periods of history regular routes for caravans of camels, mostly across or along the edge of the desert, which carried the produce of one country into another and returned freighted with articles of exchange. It was one of these caravans, bearing Midianite merchantmen across the desert from the region of Babylon, which carried Joseph into Egypt.* A similar caravan, following the same route, more than seventeen centuries later, brought the "wise men from the East," with a similar freight of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, to worship the new-born babe at Bethlehem.† From the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, who came with a very great train, and camels that bore spices, and very much gold, and precious stones,‡ down to the visit of the Ethiopian eunuch who returned home from Jerusalem in a chariot, and carried with him the Christianity he learned from the lips of Philip,§ there had doubtless been frequent communication kept up between Ethiopia and Judea, chiefly by means of caravans of camels.||

In riding the camel, the same saddle is used as for loading, a cushion being added for the greater comfort of the rider, who, when proceeding at a slow pace, sits or lies down in every imaginable posture.¶ A simple halter is used in guiding him. The camel also frequently carries a *maffa*, or two of them bear a *takhtravan*, vehicles already described as borne by mules. The passage in Isa. xxi., 7, may denote a litter borne by camels. It is supposed by some that the camel furniture in which Rachel hid the household gods of Laban, her father, denotes such a litter. To this view there are great objections. It can not be said that any one sits *upon*, but *within*, a *maffa* or a *takhtravan*; besides, these refinements of civilization, particularly the latter, were not likely to be found any more *then* than *now* in the tent of a nomad whose wife and children are accus-

* Gen. xxxvii., 28.

† Matt. ii., 11.

‡ 1 Kings x., 2.

§ Acts viii., 26-39.

|| 2 Kings viii., 9; 1 Chron. xi., 40; Ezra ii., 1-67.

¶ Gen. xxiv., 64; 1 Sam. xxx., 17.

tomed from their earliest years to ride in the usual manner. To us, the picture of Rachel seated upon the "camel furniture" is true to life, for we have often seen its counterpart. Jacob was hastily breaking up his encampment; his goods were packed and loaded, and, with his flocks and herds, already on the way. Rachel's favorite camel* knelt at the door of the tent; the saddle-bags and cushions, which were to be set upon him for her convenience and comfort, lay piled upon the floor while she sat upon them, that the carpets, utensils, and other articles, and, finally, the tent itself, might be packed and loaded upon the camels. Laban had arrived in pursuit the evening before, and had encamped at a short distance off. Jacob, with three days' start, had traveled seven days before he was overtaken. He now hoped to start off his entire company, with the flocks, so early in the morning that he would remain alone on the spot to encounter the wrath of his father-in-law. Laban doubtless discovered what was going on, and went over before the encampment was quite broken up. The favorable turn which Jacob's affairs then unexpectedly took induced him to remain where he was through the day and the following night, while his flocks and herds pursued their journey under the guidance of his shepherds and servants.† Our interpretation of this historical incident essentially agrees with the view of the matter taken by Josephus; the only difference is that in the "camel's furniture" he includes the camel's large saddle, within which he supposes the images to have been secreted; and this may have been the case, or, as we have suggested, the camel may have been already saddled for Rachel's use.‡

The attempt has often been made to establish a specific distinction between the dromedary and the common camel, which does not exist in nature. It would be as reasonable to consider the saddle-horse a distinct species from the pack-horse.

* Gen. xxxi., 17.

† Gen. xxxi., 54.

‡ Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. i., chap. 20. The foregoing objections to the *takhtavan* and *maffa* equally apply to the contrivance described by Layard, "Nineveh," i., 101. The "Arabian Nights" (p. 453) mention the *hodage* on which sat the Princess of Yemana, upon her *hetnaka*; and the note explains that "the ladies of Arabia ride upon female camels, and sit upon a carpet rolled into a sort of cushion called *hodage*;" but we think that in the case of Rachel the "furniture" includes more than this. The word *hodage* is now often used as synonymous with *maffa*.

The dromedary is only a more highly-bred animal, well tended, trained to the best paces, and never loaded. His long, swinging gait is trying to the rider, being a racking amble; but his speed is great, often amounting to seven or eight miles an hour, and he can travel long without stopping. He is often employed by the couriers or posts, as in ancient times.*

The powers of endurance, speed, and utility of the dromedary, or riding camel, may be exemplified by the following circumstance: before the establishment of a telegraph line from England to Bagdad, the British resident at the latter place received his mails far in advance of every one else by dromedary post, which traveled once a fortnight from Damascus to Bagdad, right across the desert, a distance of eight hundred miles, which was performed in nine days. The dromedary was changed three times during the entire journey, in one part of which there was no water for three days.†

The camel has often been used in warfare, both in ancient and modern times. He is thus represented on the monuments at Nineveh, was so used by Bonaparte in Egypt, and is still employed in like manner by the present viceroy.‡

We have described the valuable qualities of the camel, chiefly to the nomad of the desert, both as a beast of burden and for riding. We ought to add that his usefulness is not limited to these particulars, for his master eats his flesh, drinks his milk, wears sandals made of his skin, uses his manure for fuel, is clothed in garments woven from his hair,§ and often dwells in tents whose curtains are made of the same material. His bleaching bones lie scattered in the desert, attesting his life-long fidelity to his master.||

* Esther viii., 10, 14; Jer. ii., 23.

† Ussher, p. 493.

‡ In the celebrated battle fought under the walls of Sardis between Cyrus and Croesus, the cavalry of the latter fled at the sight and smell of the camels, which formed the first rank of the Persian army. Some writers have inferred from this circumstance that the horse always has an antipathy for the camel; that Cyrus had no cavalry in his army, etc. (Gillies, "Ancient Greece," vol. i., chap. vii., p. 321.) This is a mistake. It is well known in the East that the horse is always frightened *the first time* he sees a camel, but he very soon becomes accustomed to him, and does not mind him at all. He is also frightened the first time he sees an ass. We have often made both experiments. The incident in the battle of Sardis only proves that camels were rare in Asia Minor in the sixth century before Christ, which is not the case now.

§ Matt. iii., 4.

|| Thevenot, p. 177.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILD BEASTS OF BIBLE LANDS.

THE description contained in Job xxxviii., 39-41; xxxix., 1-30; xl., 15-24; and xli., 1-34, is an epitome of the wonders of Natural History, as known in the days of that patriarch. The difficulties of interpretation presented by the poetic style of these passages have been greatly enhanced by the attempt to identify the creatures here spoken of with such as could be found in the country where Job dwelt. This is evidently a mistake, for no one has claimed that the peacock, for instance, was indigenous to that region; it could only have been known by report through the descriptions of travelers, and by the specimens brought from India.* The creatures described in the book of Job, with regard to the identification of which there has been a difference of opinion, are few in number, and we imagine that the above-mentioned principle will go far toward settling existing doubts. What animal, for instance, but the elephant can be intended by behemoth,† whose “nose pierceth through snares;” who manages his powerful proboscis and its finger-like extremity with such skill as to unravel and destroy any combination of snares and nets that may be set to catch him; who delights in the water, and who seems huge enough to swallow up “a river”—“even Jordan”—if such a rendering of the word be insisted upon; who lifts up his tail like a cedar when he charges an enemy? “He that made him has furnished him his weapon,”‡ his sharp tusks; and, unlike the hippopotamus, as to fodder, “the mountains bring him forth food where all the beasts of the field play.” “He is,” moreover, “the chief of the *works* (Hebr.) of God,” by which nothing can be meant save that he is the largest known creature living. Nor is it likely that the elephant was unknown in Palestine in Job’s time, and that its inhabitants were ignorant of the valu-

* 1 Kings x., 22.

† Job xl., 15-24.

‡ Drake’s Translation.

able ivory obtained from his tusks, while they were acquainted with the peacock, which existed in the same countries as the elephant.* Ivory has been discovered in some of the oldest remains of Nineveh and Egypt. The elephant was well known to the Israelites in the days of Solomon; for in 1 Kings x., 22; 2 Chron. ix., 21, the word translated *ivory* in our version means, literally, *elephants' teeth*. At a later period the elephant became common in South-western Asia, being employed in warfare, as is still practiced in India. Darius and Antiochus are particularly mentioned in history as having many elephants in their armies; and the Shah of Persia even now keeps state elephants, and rides on a very elegant *howdah*.† We have already spoken of the unicorn, or reem (Hebr.),‡ in our account of the cattle of South-western Asia.

As for the leviathan,§ both this description and a comparison with Psal. civ., 26, makes it evident that the word was used not in a scientific but a popular sense, to denote the large, scaly monsters that dwell in the water, whether it be the river or the sea. It is evident that the crocodile was then supposed to have considerable affinity with the shark, and both being called by the same name, most of Job's description applies to the former, while some portion can refer only to the latter.¶ The words, "maketh a path to shine after him," doubtless refer to the phosphorescent light which shines in all parts of the Mediterranean whenever a large fish, or boat, or even an oar, moves rapidly through the water, and which is produced by the small gelatinous animalculæ which swarm in that sea. The word leviathan has even been applied to a large sea-serpent, or python, whether real or imaginary, on account of the scales which cover it, like the crocodile,¶ and has also been used with reference to a many-headed "dragon" dwelling in the sea, doubtless imaginary.** The ancient heathen nations had many legends referring to this monster, and many people inhabiting the Levant still believe in its existence.

The lion exists no longer in South-western Asia, except in some isolated and comparatively inaccessible districts. Schwartz states that he is still occasionally met with, as of old, in the

* Job xxxix., 13.

† Job xxxix., 9-12.

‡ Isa. xxvii., 1.

§ Morier, "First Journey," p. 210.

¶ Job xli.

|| Job xli., 31, 32.

** Psal. lxxiv., 13, 14.

desert between Palestine and Egypt;* but he is mostly confined to the vicinity of the banks of the Euphrates between Bussorah and Bagdad, where impenetrable jungles and reedy marshes afford him a protection against the deadly fire-arms of modern times.† Both the black-maned and the maneless varieties have been seen in this region; but the more common kind is what naturalists call the Asiatic lion, to distinguish it from the African, being somewhat smaller, more compact, and having a short, curly mane. There is abundant proof, however, that the lion was anciently common, not only in Palestine, but in all the adjoining countries: no animal is more frequently or spiritedly represented in the hunting scenes of the bass-reliefs of Nineveh and Egypt. The former of these are especially remarkable for their spirit and truthfulness; and it shows the



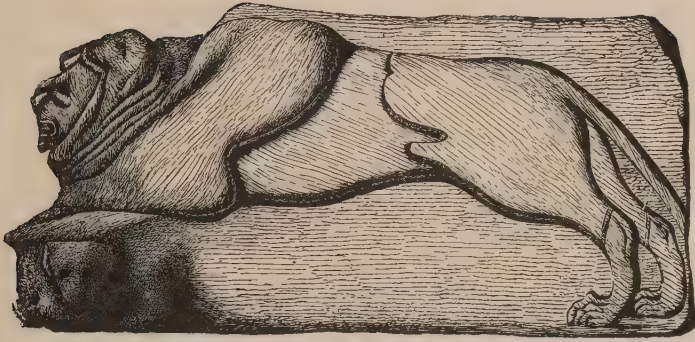
Claw at the
End of the
Lion's Tail.
Assyrian
Sculpture.

careful observation of natural phenomena by these people that they represented the claw at the end of the lion's tail, of whose existence modern naturalists doubted until lately. Sculptured lions of various dates are common among the ruins of the ancient cities and temples of Asia Minor, particularly at Euyuk and Angora. Even in Greece the figures of two lions adorn the gate-way of the Cyclopean wall of Mycenæ, the city of Agamemnon, who led the Greeks to the siege of Troy. It is, moreover, an interesting fact that, in all the languages spoken by the present inhabitants of Western Asia, there exist numerous proverbs and popular expressions attesting an intimate acquaintance with the character and habits of this animal; and considering the little intercourse which exists with neighboring nations, we are safe in tracing some of these expressions at least to a time when the lion was as common as he is represented to have once been both by the Scriptures and by ancient historians generally. He is still regarded as the emblem of manly courage and physical strength;‡ and the family name of "Son of a Lion" has been adopted by many, both Muslims and others, who claim, whether right or wrong, that an ancestor of theirs has performed some act of unusual prowess. We learn from Johannes Phocas, who traveled in Palestine toward

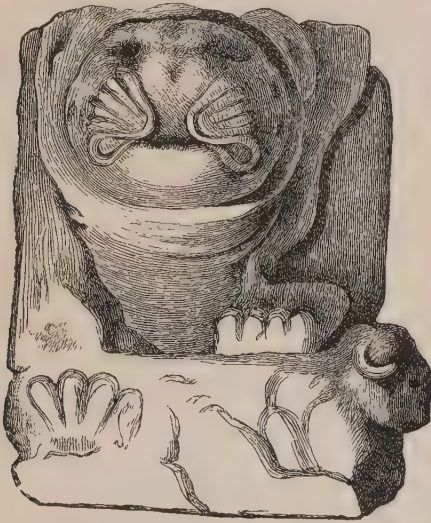
* Isa. xxx., 6.

† Jer. xlix., 19; Ezek. xix., 3.

‡ Judg. xiv., 18; 2 Sam. xvii., 10.



Maneless Lion at Euyuk, in Asia Minor.—Side View. (Gen. xlix., 9.)



Front View of the same.

the end of the twelfth century, that lions were still to be found in his day in the reedy coverts that line the Jordan.*

The panther is called "namer" in the Hebrew Bible, which means *spotted*. His skin is covered with dark spots beautifully arranged in regular circles upon a fawn-colored and white ground; these are alluded to in Jer. xiii., 23. Our version calls this animal a leopard, a word which was coined only in the 4th century, to distinguish the African from the Asiatic panther.

* Reland, "Palestine," i., 274.

The "namer" of Palestine and South-western Asia generally, is a powerful animal but little smaller than the Asiatic lioness, and occupying the same place in the economy of nature that the Bengal tiger does in India. The Arabs give him essentially the same name as the ancient Hebrews. They call him *nimr*, making but a slight change in the vowel sounds.

The panther seems to be about as common now as it was in ancient times. It was well known to the Greeks and the Romans, who represented the car of Bacchus, one of their divinities, as drawn by two panthers. The habits of this animal bear much resemblance to those of the lion, with this great difference, however, that the latter is not found upon lofty mountains, but frequents the coverts of the warm and sunny plains, while the panther only traverses the low grounds in the night in quest of prey, and spends the day amidst the barren rocks and crags of lonely and inaccessible cliffs, where he is occasionally spied by a wood-cutter or adventurous hunter lying at full length, and sunning himself on the flat summit of some rocky precipice.* A friend of ours pointed out to us not long ago a spot where he had seen a panther stretched out unconcernedly, on a broad flat rock on the steep bank of the river Damoor, in Southern Lebanon. The "tiger tracks" which Lynch repeatedly saw upon the reedy banks of the Jordan were doubtless made by panthers; for at night-fall this animal steals down from his lair to scour the valleys and the plains in search of prey: he has been known to traverse in a single night a distance of twenty-five to thirty miles. Like the lion, he avoids an encounter with man, unless wounded by him, or apprehending an attack; but should he chance to get a taste of human flesh, he is said to seek and prefer it, as does the lion and the Bengal tiger.† The panther, however, usually spends but a few days in the same locality. He is greatly dreaded by all the beasts of the field, which hide themselves at his approach, and dare not venture forth to feed at night, as is their wont. We have repeatedly taken our stand on the top of some isolated rock or cliff on the edge of a plain, whence we could study the wonderfully varied sights and sounds of an Oriental summer's eve. The day had been silent, the voice of the birds even be-

* Cant. iv., 8.

† 2 Kings xvii., 25; Jer. v., 6; Bruce, vi., 143.

ing hushed by the heat, and the "cicada" alone heard in a monotonous concert from every shady grove; even this sound grew gradually silent as the mountain shadows lengthened across the plain, and the sunlight died away. The rays of the moon, however, were hardly perceptible before the song of the cricket commenced; the cry of a solitary jackal was heard from the edge of the wood, and was presently answered by one, then by another and another of his companions, until the grand chorus was repeated by the mountain echoes; the fox barked close by, the owl screeched, and the great owl in the wood uttered its mourning cry as it watched for the hare that darted through the shadows.* We could hear the footsteps, and occasionally catch a glimpse of a whole troop of wild boars, old and young, as they came hastening down from the woody coverts of the mountains to wallow in the mire, and dig among the roots of the plain. Truly it seemed as though Nature herself were keeping *Ramazan*—fast asleep all the long day, and waking up at eve to spend the entire night in work, revelry, and fun.† But how different was the scene when a panther had come into the neighborhood! It seemed as if a scent of blood and carnage was pervading the atmosphere, communicating to every creature telegraphic notice of the danger nigh. I have on such an occasion again repaired to the same post of observation, the evening was perhaps more beautiful; the song of the cicada had died away, and that of the cricket succeeded it, giving the signal for all to be up and doing; but, even before darkness came on, the horses and cattle in the plain were to be seen hastening home, and such as had no shelter clustering close together in evidently apprehensive groups. No wild boars hurried down the mountain to luxuriate in the marsh; no jackal or fox dared utter his cry; not a sound broke the ominous stillness; all seemed determined to fast that night rather than, by stirring, to draw the attention of the common foe, who, they well knew, was stealthily prowling about, "seeking whom he might devour."‡

The panther crawls silently toward his prey,§ and, approaching it unperceived,|| leaps suddenly upon its back,¶ and bury-

* Deut. xiv., 16; Mic. i., 8.

§ Psa. x., 10.

† Psa. civ., 19-23.

|| Hos. xiii., 7.

‡ 1 Pet. v., 8.

¶ Hab. i., 8.

ing his fangs in its throat, quickly strangles his victim. This mode of attacking his prey is evidently taught him by nature, for he begins to practice it at a very early age. We once knew a panther's cub which leaped upon the back of a cow at pasture, when the latter, panic-stricken, started with her novel burden full speed for home; the young panther meanwhile appeared to enjoy the race, and bravely held on till brought into the midst of a village, where he was easily captured by the astonished rustics.

As soon as this animal has strangled his prey, he drinks its blood, and then, satiated, retires to his nearest lair. He comes again the next night, and so also the third, after which he leaves the neighborhood, and the remains of his feast are devoured by wolves, jackals, and other scavengers. During the three days, however, that the panther feeds upon his prey, the lynx alone dares venture near or share it with him. This latter animal is of the size of a large cat, and of a uniform fawn color. He is characterized by a tail only six inches long, and a tuft of stiff hair on the point of each ear. He usually lives on birds and field-mice, but seeks the companionship of the panther to so great a degree that in some regions of the country the presence of a lynx is a sure sign that his powerful patron is not far off. This relation between the two has its exact parallel in that which exists between the shark and the little pilot-fish. The spotted lynx, however, is so abundant in Northern Asia Minor, where the panther is unknown, that his beautiful skin is an article of exportation. He there preys chiefly upon hares, for which he lies in wait at night.

The shepherds are the chief sufferers from the depredations of the panther, though he occasionally kills a stray horse or cow.* It was thus that David had to encounter both a lion and a bear.† We have known several shepherds who had fought the panther single-handed with various results. The following came under our personal observation: A panther had killed a goat belonging to a flock, whose shepherds, however, determined not to interfere with an enemy they deemed too strong for them. But a beardless youth among them declared he would be avenged for the loss of his favorite goat.

* Gen. xxxi., 39; Amos iii., 12.

† 1 Sam. xvii., 34-36.

He borrowed an old single-barreled flint gun, and, with a loaded pistol in his belt, lay in wait for the enemy a few paces from the body of the slaughtered victim. The sun had hardly set when he heard a slight noise among the pebbles on the high ground behind him, and, turning round, he saw to his surprise a huge panther, crouching like a cat, and apparently on the point of springing upon him. The young shepherd, nothing daunted, took deliberate aim at the heart of his antagonist, and fired. He had hardly pulled the trigger, however, when the panther leaped, and the lad barely saved himself by as quickly falling forward on his face to the ground. In this position he drew his pistol, and was fortunate enough to lodge its ball in the head of his already wounded foe. Overjoyed at his success, the young man climbed to the top of the hill and shouted loudly to the shepherds in the plain below, "I have killed the panther!" They would not believe him, however, but thought that he was fooling them. He was compelled, therefore, to tie his girdle around the panther's neck, and thus to drag it trailing along as best he could to the fold, when the dogs all fled at his approach, and the astonished shepherds gave full vent to their joy and surprise.

The panther must not be confounded with the beautiful and graceful spotted creature, not very much larger than a cat, properly called *shitah*, and trained to hunt for his masters in Persia and Hindoostan. This animal has probably never existed in South-western Asia, though the skin is often offered for sale at Constantinople, Beirut, and Alexandria, being brought by peddlers from Bagdad and Bokhara. These skins are highly prized by Muslims, and especially Dervishes, as praying-rugs, which they fancy render their devotions more efficacious. The skin of the panther is preferred on account of its larger size, but it can rarely be obtained, and costs from ten to twenty-five dollars. The skin of the stag, roebuck, and wild goat are equally esteemed for this purpose. The *shitah*, or hunting leopard, does not appear ever to have existed, either wild or domesticated, in any of the lands of the Bible; he is not figured upon the monuments of Egypt or of Nineveh, but on both the lion is represented as chained and employed in the chase. A wild cat is found in Asia, but it is no larger than the domestic animal, and may either be its original stock,

or has been derived from it. The tame panthers which have been seen by travelers in Palestine were doubtless specimens of the shitab, obtained from India or Persia.*

In 1847 we made the first sketch of the then unknown monument of the Kaïm Hùrmùl, as it is called, near the sources of the Orontes, in Coele-Syria, which sketch has been published in Thomson's "The Land and the Book," vol. i., pp. 364, 365. This monument consists of a solid structure in the form of a square tower crowned with a pyramid; its entire height is about seventy-five feet, and its four faces contain life-size bass-relief representations of animals and implements of the chase. The only mention of it made in authors not modern is by the Arab geographer, Abulfeda (A.D. 1320).† There is now no inscription, but there can be little doubt that it is a sepulchral monument; for it resembles the Tortosa tombs, as well as those of Absalom and Zechariah at Jerusalem, and the one at Suweideh.‡ A slab has indeed fallen from the southern face of the monument, which probably contained an inscription.

The wild animals figured on this interesting structure are doubtless those most common in the region at the time of its erection. They are still the most common beasts of the chase in the greater part of Western Asia, and we shall make use of these sculptures as the text of our further description.

1st. The gazelle is represented as pursued by a dog. We have seen this beautiful creature feeding in small companies on the surrounding plain even to the foot of this very monument, and, when alarmed, bounding away with inimitable grace to the nearest hills. It is still hunted by the Arabs with greyhounds, which with difficulty overtake it on the plain, but have to give up the chase as soon as the game takes to the rocks.§ The word translated *roe* in many Scripture texts properly signifies a *gazelle*.

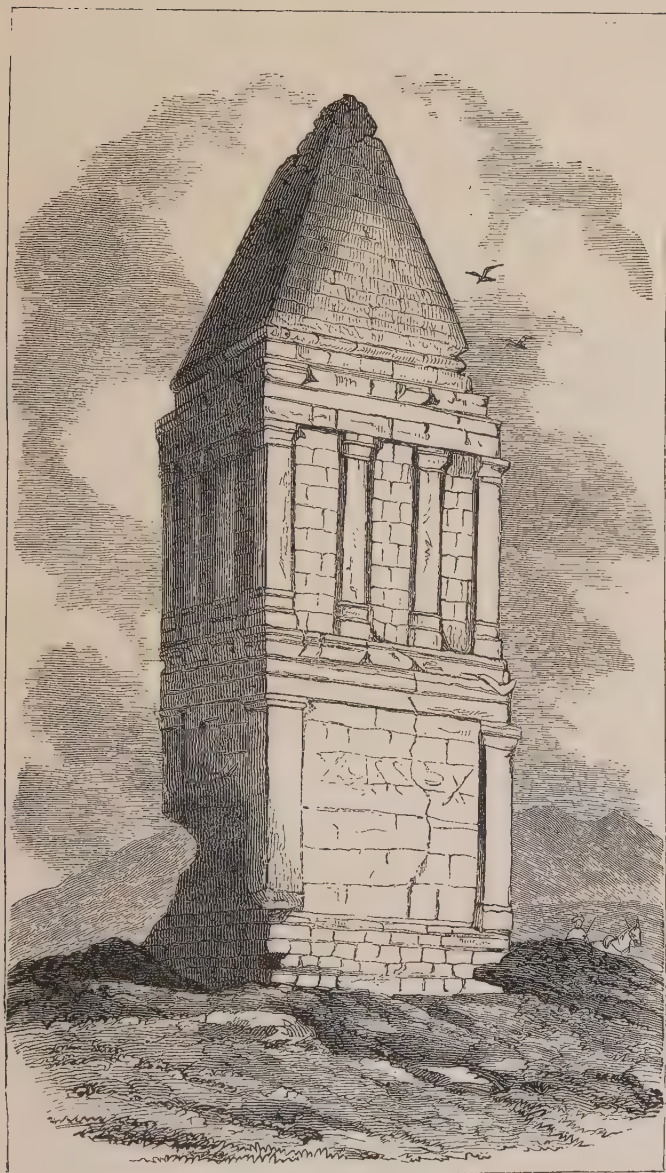
2d. The wild boar is attacked by two dogs, as is still done in the battues, which often take place on Mount Lebanon under the leadership of the sheikhs. The scene is highly spirited,

* Thomson, "The Land and the Book," vol. ii., pp. 156, 157.

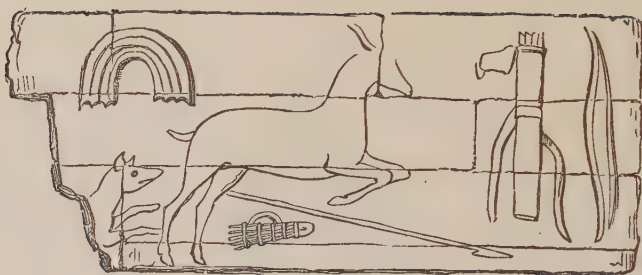
† "Tab. Syr.," p. 150.

‡ Porter's "Damascus," ii., 121. Similar Roman tombs were found by Barth in Northern Africa. See "Travels," vol. i., pp. 114, 119.

§ 1 Chron. xii., 8; Prov. vi., 5; Isa. xiii., 14.



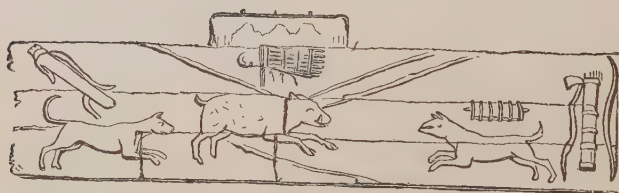
The Ka'im Hümmül, in Cœle-Syria.



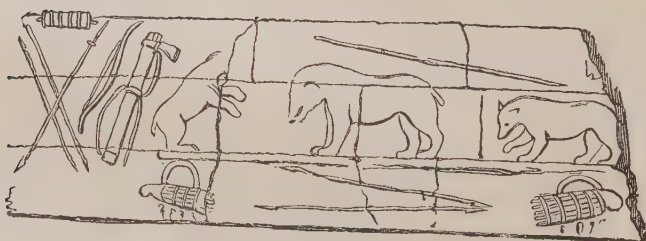
FIGURES ON THE WEST SIDE.



FIGURES ON THE NORTH SIDE.



FIGURES ON THE SOUTH SIDE.



FIGURES ON THE EAST SIDE.

Carvings on the Kaïm Hürmül.

and is drawn from life: three spears are stuck in the body of the beast, and a fourth lies on the ground; but he fights to the last against the fierce hounds that beset him. These appear to be of the same breed as is still used in this sport, with ears erect, and long curling tail. They are the powerful short-haired shepherd-dogs of the hilly regions. The Asiatic wild boar seems to be the same in all respects as that found in Continental Europe, the young of both having the same longitudinal stripes on the back. The prohibition of swine's flesh originally made by Moses to the Jews,* and subsequently adopted by the religion of Islam, whose followers constitute the bulk of the population of South-western Asia at the present day, has caused these animals greatly to increase in the land; so that they often commit extensive ravages, and sadly destroy the crops. Hence the Muslims are frequently compelled to go out with their guns at night, and lie in wait for their cunning enemy, or to hunt for him in the day-time with dogs, whether two or three together, or in general battues; in Mesopotamia, however, he is hunted with a spear on horseback. When successful, as their laws do not permit them even to touch the "unclean beast," they sell him for a trifle to a Christian, or, failing to find a customer, leave the carcass to be devoured by vultures and jackals. There are professional wild-boar hunters; but these are always either Christians or gypsies.

The wild boar lies in a covert during the day, whether among the reeds which skirt a river or swamp, or in the densest thickets of the forest-clad mountain. They come forth to feed at night, plowing up the ground with their powerful tusks in quest of tender roots, bulbs, and grubs, preferring the loose soil of cultivated fields; they eat acorns with avidity, also the pods ("husks") which fall from the carob-tree,† and greedily consume the standing crops, approaching boldly, though cautiously, down to the very threshing-floors. They break through the hedges of the vineyards, and devour and trample down quantities of fruit in a single night.‡ Their scent is extremely keen, and effectually warns them against danger. In the winter, when the snow covers the mountain tops, they select a large evergreen-tree, whose branches, shed-

* Lev. xi., 7; Deut. xiv., 8.

† Luke xv., 16.

‡ Psal. lxxx., 13.

ding the snow, pile it into a circular wall, and shelter themselves during the day within this little natural fortress; the wood-cutter sometimes comes suddenly upon a whole family of them thus quietly resting together. The male is large, and armed with powerful tusks, with which he inflicts severe injuries when attacked or wounded.

The wild boar may be domesticated only when taken very young. We remember a specimen owned some years ago by Mr. Stevens, the British consul at Samsoon, on the Black Sea, which used to accompany its master with his dogs on shooting expeditions, and Mr. Stevens assured us that, owing to its keen scent, this sporting pig was generally the first to find the game, alive or dead; he particularly prized it in pheasant-shooting. The only inconvenience was that, not having been taught to fetch, and being extremely voracious, it devoured the game which it caught. We ourselves saw it in full pursuit of a hare in company with the greyhounds.

The wild boar continues to make his lair in the woody solitudes of Tabor, Carmel, and Lebanon,* and abounds in the reedy marshes of the Upper Jordan and in the swamps below Damascus. And it is interesting to note that, in the sculptured monuments of ancient Nineveh, he is represented as lurking among the reeds, where he is still found on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates.†

3d. The antlered stag and the roebuck. The former abounds in all the forests of Asia Minor, particularly on Taurus and Anti-taurus, where it is now hunted by "stalking." The latter is still more extensively known, but equally seeks the protection of the forests, and frequents the edge of mountain streams. It is sometimes caught in a snow-drift, and is easily tamed and kept as a pet in the yard or garden, like the gazelle. We have known several of these graceful creatures thus domesticated, and have had occasion to notice their wonderful fleetness, and to witness some of their extraordinary feats of leaping. The expression "swift as an elik" (roe), is a proverb among the Turks.‡

There are several species of antlered stags, the largest of which, a magnificent animal, we have repeatedly seen "leaping

* Psa. lxxx., 13.

† Layard, i., 109.

‡ 2 Sam. ii., 18.

upon the mountains,"* or guarding the rear of a small herd of hinds and young deer. In the summer they may sometimes be descried early in the morning feeding on the edge of the forest, the hart apparently unconcerned, but the hinds ever watchful and timid; nor will they sit down to take their rest without first selecting some high commanding position,† and



The Roebuck of Western Asia. (2 Sam. ii., 18.)

even then, while nodding, they frequently turn their eyes warily, or raise their nostrils in different directions, and when they discover a lurking enemy, bound lightly away with amazing swiftness and agility. It is evidently in a similar position that the pair are represented on the Kaïm Hûrmûl, though both are bucks; for one is feeding while the other sits and watches. These animals assemble in vast numbers on the summit of certain mountains at the beginning of winter, and the natives call these places their *tekkehs*, or meeting-houses. They migrate thence in various directions, without appearing to affect the number of deer found in any locality.

4th. The bear is represented in a spirited manner with two cubs, one of which is standing on its hind feet. This animal has always been common in all the mountainous or hilly portions of Western Asia, but has never existed in Egypt, Arabia, or Southern Mesopotamia. We give a copy of a representation of him taken from an Assyrian cup, which indicates that he existed anciently, as now, upon the neighboring mountains of Koordistan. The first historic mention of this animal now

* Cant. ii., 8, 9.

† 2 Sam. xxii., 34.

extant is found in 1 Sam. xvii., 34-36; and among the many notices of him none is more famous than his encounter with



Bear from an Assyrian brass Bowl. (2 Kings ii., 24.)

Godfrey of Bouillon at the siege of Antioch (A.D. 1098) by the Crusaders; nor did the Bruin of the eleventh century prove inferior to those of ancient times, for the brave knight barely escaped with his life.*

We have all read accounts of fearful encounters with the bears of Russia and of the Pyrenees. The same animal essentially inhabits Asia Minor and Syria. There are varieties of color among them; for some are of a dark-brown, almost black; others yellowish, with a dark line of long stiff hair from the neck to the tail; others, again, have a large circular ash-colored spot on the top of each shoulder-blade. These varieties of color do not seem to depend on age, sex, or season of the year; for we have seen two cubs taken from the same litter, one of which was almost black, while the other was marked with the above-mentioned white epaulets.

The bear is powerful, keen-scented, sagacious, and cunning. He is generally harmless, and greatly terrifies people by the cool, unconcerned manner in which he makes his nightly calls to the choicest fruit-trees even close to an inhabited dwelling. He often delays his return to the mountains till broad daylight has revealed his unwelcome presence, and raised a "hue and cry" around him; he then makes a dignified retreat, apparently surprised at the commotion he has occasioned. These depredations of the bear are very extensive; for he not only consumes a vast quantity of fruit, but breaks many branches of the trees on which he climbs, and roughly handles other people's property. He is also at this season quite partial to a *bath*, and does not hesitate to jump into the large tanks or reservoirs of water to refresh himself after his repasts. We have heard of a bear's cub, who, whether in imitation of his mother, or led by his own

* Michaud, "Croisades," iv., 111.

instincts, once leaped into a tank whose water was low, so that when he had drunk his fill, and performed his ablutions, he found the wall so high that he could not get out again; he was discovered there the next morning, and soon dispatched by the indignant proprietor.

As long as the fruit season lasts, the bear is well-behaved and harmless. He hides on the lofty mountains during the day, and comes down at night to the gardens, or orchards and vineyards, and skillfully avoids the snares laid for him. Honey is his favorite food, and he will often run considerable risks in order to gratify his greediness for it. We remember an adventure of Bruin which ended in his death. A swarm of bees had made their hive in the cleft of a precipitous rock. Bruin had doubtless scented the dainty morsel as he passed along in his nightly maraudings, in quest of cherries and apricots in the gardens below; he determined to secure it, and must have climbed to a considerable height, for he was found stone dead in the early morning at the bottom of the cliff.

When winter comes, and the snow covers the lofty mountains which he inhabits, the bear withdraws to a cave, and awaits the return of spring in a dormant state. It is during the interval between the cessation of autumnal fruits and crops, and his retirement to winter-quarters, that he manifests his carnivorous propensities, and becomes ferocious and aggressive even to man. He prowls about mountain villages, and fiercely attacks the flocks of goats and sheep, even in broad daylight. We remember visiting a village on the Anti-taurus which the day before had suffered the depredations of a bear of monstrous size. He had surprised a flock of goats, and when attacked by the shepherds and their dogs with a hue and cry which brought out every villager from his hut, he had slowly retired, flinging stones at his pursuers with such accurate aim and force that severe wounds were inflicted on them. Later in the day he had gone boldly into the fold on the edge of the village and carried off a goat, which he dragged to a hillock near by and deliberately devoured, in plain sight of the inhabitants, who, not possessing a single gun, dared not disturb the audacious brute. He was pointed out to us ranging over the hills, already covered with a slight fall of snow; and, watching with our spy-glass, we saw him dig up the remains of another goat,

which he had partly devoured and buried there.* We have repeatedly known the bear at this season to fall upon and devour children who had strayed out but a short distance from the mountain villages; and we particularly remember a Turkish girl about thirteen years of age, who thus lost her life on the Ak-dagh, near Amasia.†

Some have supposed that the bear has not the thirst for blood which is characteristic of the wolf or panther. He sometimes, however, seems quite as ferocious, and has been repeatedly known to kill apparently for the pleasure of it. In a certain mountain village the sheep were shut up in one of those stables which are partly dug out of the mountain side, and have a room in front built of rough stones, with a flat roof overhead, and a broad chimney. The door was made fast at evening, and the dogs, being released from duty, had sought refuge from the cold in their master's house. A bear came, however, at dead of night, and, descending by the chimney, strangled every one of the sheep. After gorging himself with their blood, he piled their bodies in the wide fire-place, and climbing thereon escaped unperceived!

About the end of the year the bear ranges in various directions in search of winter-quarters; these are usually a cave among the rocks, but he sometimes digs a hole and burrows under-ground on the mountain side. He lies for a while near the mouth, or on the outside of the entrance, to make sure that no intruder will disturb his retirement, and there prepares a bed of twigs and dried leaves (oak by preference). He always lies facing the opening, and with one of his paws in his mouth making a loud purring all the time. The native hunters insist that he is very thin in flesh when he goes to sleep, but very fat in the spring when he wakes up. The snow sometimes covers the opening, and completely hides the cave; but experienced hunters can generally detect certain peculiar small openings, caused by his breathing, which indicate his presence within. It is hard to rouse him from his stupor, and a shot has to be fired, or stones thrown in, to start him. Should he then meet with a single antagonist, he does not hesitate to attack him, and generally has the best of it. Bears remain

* Dan. vii., 5.

† 2 Kings ii., 23, 24.

about a month in their dens. The cubs, usually two in number, are born during this period, and remain in the same place a couple of months, after which they follow their dam through the rest of the year. Hence a she-bear with two cubs is no uncommon sight, and the bass-relief of Kaïm Hùrmùl is a faithful picture drawn from life.

When attacked in her den, the she-bear will not hesitate to abandon her cubs, and seek safety in flight; hunters are then tempted to carry off her young; but she soon discovers her loss, and then nothing can exceed the rage with which she pursues the robber. His only safety is in dropping the cubs and fleeing, for she will still follow him after safely depositing them in her den, and indeed attack any man she may then meet.* A she-bear robbed of her whelps, or a bear interrupted while making his arrangements for the winter, is more dangerous to encounter than any other wild beast in Western Asia; this is intimated in the Scriptures,† where the lion and the bear are represented as equally to be dreaded. When rushing upon an enemy, his speed is great: rising upon his haunches, he leaps upon his foe with the momentum thus acquired, and, clasping him in his deadly embrace, bites at his throat and tears his bowels with the formidable claws of his hind feet. When standing up, the bear reaches the height of a tall man, and the weight of a full-grown specimen is rarely below four hundred pounds, about one-fifth of which consists of fat.

The narrative contained in 2 Kings ii., 23-25, has sometimes been objected to by persons who, we apprehend, have been misled by a defective translation, or have failed to attend to the circumstances of the case. The path of the prophet Elisha lay through the district of Bethel, the stronghold of idolatry in Israel,‡ where, as in Dan, stood one of the golden calves set up by Jeroboam. There was a crowd of idle young men on the outskirts of the town, lawless, rude, and amusing themselves—perhaps throwing stones with their slings—for the word translated “little children” in our version is the same in Hebrew as that used in 1 Kings xii., 8, 10, 14, where it is applied to young men of the same age as King Rehoboam—41. In all the lan-

* 2 Sam. xvii., 8; Hos. xiii., 8.

† Lam. iii., 10; Amos v., 19.

‡ 1 Kings xii., 28-33.

guages of the East, moreover, the words "child" and "children" often denote simply a social relation, and are constantly applied to full-grown persons, as in the New Testament.*

No one who has traveled in the East can have failed to notice the extreme lawlessness of a certain class of boys and young men living on the outskirts of a town, especially toward a Jew, a Christian, or a European, who should happen to be passing by alone or unprotected. Let him go, for instance, to the castle-hill of Smyrna; and if it be a holiday, and the "boys" (oghlans) are out, he will perceive stones whizzing past him, and will hear the shouts of "Frank," "hat-wearer," "Giaoor," rallying the rowdies of the vicinity, and warning him to beat a hasty retreat.

Elisha, as he slowly ascended the path leading past Bethel, alone and weary, was recognized as the servant of the obnoxious Elijah; he was soon surrounded by a crowd of bitterly hostile and lawless young men, presently increased to a mob by the accession of others "coming out of the city." They abused the prophet's person, pelted him with stones, knocked off his turban, and, seeing his shaved head, hooted after him, saying, "Go up, go along, bald head," throwing stones after him. In imminent danger of his life, he stood at bay—as we have done in similar circumstances—and looking upon his fierce assailants, he invoked the help of the God he served, and whom they had exchanged for a molten calf; and He instantly sent forth "two she-bears out of the wood" of Ephraim, which killed forty-two of them, and scattered the rest. This was the last blow that needed to be struck at idolatry in Israel for the re-establishment of the worship of the true God.

* John xxi., 5; 1 John v., 21.

CHAPTER X.

THE SCAVENGERS.

No one has spent any length of time in Western Asia, or visited any considerable portion of the interior of the country, without noticing the unusual number and variety of animals, birds, and even insects, that feed upon the refuse and offal, and devour the carcasses of other species. On the highway, the ass, mule, or camel, which has fallen under its burden, and is no longer able to rise, is unloaded by its master, its saddle, halter, and even its shoes are taken off, and it is scarcely dead when its skin, too, is hastily removed, to be sold to the tanner; the carcass is left where it fell; and as the traveler passes by upon the narrow road, his horse is frightened, not more by the repulsive scent and sight, than by the eagles, vultures, ravens, crows, and magpies that take wing on his approach, or continue to dispute the prey with hungry dogs.* When night comes on, however, the winged devourers withdraw, and give place to sneaking jackals and foxes, and to the hyenas and the wolves, which now warily quit their lairs, and hasten to secure a share of the feast.

But these are only the occasional repasts of the scavengers, whose habitual resort is the "dunghill"—a prominent feature of every village; the large towns have several, generally on the outskirts, but sometimes on the edge of the public square, or on the site of a ruined or burned building.† These dunghills are formed by the accumulation of useless broken articles, the sweepings of the houses, stables, and streets, thrown there by the inhabitants, together with all kinds of refuse, and the carcass of every creature that dies in the town. According to the Mosaic law, the offal of slaughtered animals had to be burned without the camp, and this was done at Jerusalem, in the valley of Hinnom, or Ge-hinnon, called "Gehenna" in the

* Matt. xxiv., 28.

† Ezra vi., 11; Dan. ii., 5.

New Testament, whose name came to be applied to the eternal abode of the lost.* This custom is everywhere kept up by the modern Jews, who render themselves very disagreeable neighbors to other sectaries by the offensive fumes of such fires.

In every place, however, the dunghill is the resort of a variety of animals and birds, which strut about, regardless of the presence of man, with a boldness never shown elsewhere. Various birds of prey may be seen coming down with a swoop, or sitting on the roof of a neighboring house, gorged with their foul repast; while it is hard to say whether the animals which feed on the noisome heap, and take their rest curled up beside it, are mangy curs or jackals. As for the rats, they glide about with perfect unconcern.

These dunghills are a very old institution. Those of ancient cities are sometimes discovered by digging, or are laid open by winter rains, which cut a trench through them, bringing to light bones, shells, fragments of pottery, lamps, utensils, toys, the household gods, and even coins and valuable jewels.† The annexed illustration will give some idea of the smaller articles, taken at a venture, which are found in these dunghills. They are mostly of ivory or bone, copper, and rarely of glass—substances which are little or not at all oxidized. In our engraving, Nos. 1–10 and 13 are of the former; 11 and 12 of glass, and 14–19 of copper; 1, 2, 3 are spindles; 4 is a pin, and 5 and 6 are spoons; 7 is a tape-needle; 8, 9, 10 are ear-picks; 11, 12 beads; 13, an ivory knife-handle, with a lion's head; 14, a copper nail; 15, a meat-hook; 16–19 are balance-weights, one of which is of lead. Eleven of these are very nearly identical in form with the modern articles. There are often copper and sometimes silver coins; but the most common are articles in baked clay; not only broken plates, jars, and lamps, but also images of the gods.

Dunghills are mentioned in the Scriptures. Gates owed their name to the circumstance of their being situated near to one of the dunghills, the refuse and rubbish of the town being carried through them.‡ The only class of human beings that did, and do still, frequent these loathsome places are the wretchedly poor, or friendless beggars, who come here in search of

* Matt. v., 22.

† Dan. iii., 29.

‡ Neh. iii., 14; xii., 31.



Household Articles found in an ancient Dunghill. (Ezra vi., 11.)

any stale scrap of food or cast-off garments they may chance to find.* Even on the water, the traveler who approaches an Oriental city can not fail to notice the numerous gulls, cormorants, or other sea-birds which flutter about almost within reach of one's hand, and dispute together for every morsel of food or offal cast by the inhabitants into the sea.

The unusual development of the scavenger species in Western Asia is doubtless owing to several distinct causes, the chief of which may be found in a beneficent provision of nature, which thus averts a danger produced by the climate. We must also bear in mind that Western Asia and Northern Africa are the portions of the earth which have been longest occupied by man, and possessed in turn by rival empires and states, whose hostile armies were ever engaged in destructive wars.

* 1 Sam. ii., 8; Lam. iv., 5.

Their only breathing-time—if such may be called the short respite enjoyed by them—was during the Roman empire; but



Vulture carrying off the Entrails of the Slain. A Nineveh Sculpture. (Isa. xxxiv., 15.)

throughout the entire Christian era, violence, bloodshed, and wars of conquest and rapine have been their normal condition; and every one knows that such a state of things greatly favors the increase of the scavenger species, both bird and beast. The artists who adorned the walls of the temples and palaces of the ancient kings of Nineveh appropriately introduced vultures into their battle-scenes, carrying off the heads or entrails, or picking out the eyes of the slain.

But there is another and perhaps stronger reason for this increase, peculiarly Oriental, and illustrative of the character and habits of the people of Western Asia. Hospitality has always been regarded by them as a cardinal virtue, and we shall have occasion farther on to explain both its cause and extent; we may now simply mention that its principles are applied to the brute creation with a degree of strictness and conscientiousness far surpassing their dealings with their fellow-men. It is considered a favorable omen when a bird builds its nest upon the roof of the house, although that bird may be the stork, which has repeatedly been known to bring live snakes to its young, which, escaping, glide down into the house, to the dismay of the inmates. A sportsman never fires at a jackal or a wolf, unless caught in the very act of depredation, and when he meets a hyena will only hoot and spit at it. Hence all these creatures greatly multiply. The sparrow-hawk builds its nest under the very eaves of the farmer's dwelling, and carries off the young chickens before his eyes; jackals burrow in the sides of the nearest hills, and set up their yelping chorus every night, as they gather to invade his vineyard or his crops; the cunning fox creeps about his hedges, eats his fruit, and destroys his poultry; and the hyena disentombs and devours his dead.

It is not always, however, a losing game; this hospitality to the brute creation often brings its own reward. The natives, for example, always allow the swallow to build its nest about their premises, in the gate-ways, under the balconies, and even

in the very apartments they occupy. A friend of ours, having purchased an extensive farm, found the principal building studded in various places with clusters of swallows' nests, which had remained undisturbed for a series of years, and to which the birds returned each spring, as is their wont. These nests struck him as so untidy that he had them all removed, and gave orders that no swallow should thenceforward be permitted to take such a liberty with his premises. The very next season, however, the *flies* multiplied to such a degree as to become quite intolerable. They could be compared only to Egypt's fourth plague.* Every invention extant in the civilized world for getting rid of these pests was tried in vain. Strings and bunches of heath were hung from all the ceilings, and the swarms collected on them at night were burned with gunpowder; but all to no purpose. The only remaining alternative was then tried—the swallows were allowed to return. When we visited the place the following summer, scarcely a fly was to be seen! We counted the nests, and, calculating the number of young reared in them twice in the year, we found that eight thousand flies a day would furnish but ten for every bird!



The long-tailed Magpie.

The scavenger birds need little description. The chief of them are the eagles, vultures, crows, and magpies. They all possess the keenest scent for carrion, and every hunter knows that whenever he brings down his game he may expect the scavengers shortly to appear, though no trace of them may be

* Exod. viii., 24.

visible.* The eagle is frequently alluded to in Scripture; for he evidently was as common anciently as now, and had the same habits. He does not hesitate to feast upon the dead, though he mostly lives by hunting. We have had repeated opportunities to watch him in the pursuit of game, and particularly remember a poor hare on the top of Mount Taurus so paralyzed with fear at the sight of his dreaded foe descending like a shot to the earth, that the eagle walked slowly up to him, and plunged his talons into his sides without his victim making any effort to escape.

One species of vulture is particularly interesting, as explaining a passage of Exodus. It is the rashama, very common in



The Rashama, or "Bird of Pharaoh." (Exod. xix., 4.)

Egypt, where he is called "the Bird of Pharaoh," and well known in some other parts of Turkey under the Turkish name of *Ak Baba*—the "white father." It was venerated by the ancients as the type of parental love, for it was believed to feed its young with its own flesh. They also thought there existed no male of this bird, and that the female possessed in herself the perfect

power of reproduction. Some of the early Christian writers argue thence that Christ being born of a virgin was not contrary to the natural order of things.† It is interesting, however, to find that Moses made no such blunder in natural history; for rashama has in Hebrew a feminine termination; but in Exod. xix., 4, and Deut. xiv., 13, he adopts a masculine termination, and changes the word to rasham.‡

But the most commonly seen scavengers are the magpie and the cinereal crow, mostly black, but partly of a dirty white. The magpie makes himself useful by picking off the horse-flies from the cattle, sheep, and even the deer, and is hence on

* Matt. xxiv., 28.

† Tertullian, "Valent," c. 10; Basil, "Hex. Hom.," 8.

‡ Bruce, vol. vi., pp. 201-203.



The Crow of Western Asia. (Prov. xxx., 17.)

terms of familiar friendship with them; but he is a shameless thief, prowling about the kitchen and back yard, and ready to come down from the roof, the top of the wall, or the adjoining tree, where he is on the watch, as soon as your back is turned. The ravens which supplied with food the prophet Elijah* were probably not the large jet-black birds of that name, but the much more common cinereal crows; it is also the young of the latter which are noted for being very noisy.† But there are also scavenger animals, which characterize the country, and are spoken of in Scripture.

The hyena is not often mentioned in the Bible, yet there is no doubt that this animal was common in ancient times. The valley of Zeboim evidently derived its name from the hyenas, which either usually or at certain seasons frequented its wild gorges; for it is now called by the Arabs "Shuk ed Dubba"—*the ravine of the hyena*. This loathsome animal will not attack living creatures unless hard pressed by hunger, but feeds almost exclusively upon carrion, and has itself a most offensive, cadaverous odor. It sometimes equals a large dog in stature, but is always low in the hind-quarters, short



The Asiatic Hyena. (Zeph. ii., 15.)

* 1 Kings xvii., 6.

† Psa. cxlvii., 9.

in body, and compactly built; its powerful fore-feet enable it to hold its prey firmly while tearing it with its tremendous jaws. As the natives of Western Asia, particularly the Muslims, bury their dead in shallow graves outside of the towns, a fresh grave is apt to attract the hyenas of the neighborhood, which drag out and devour the body. They prowl about the villages singly in the dark, and utter a cry so nearly resembling that of an infant in distress that persons have frequently rushed to the rescue, and have been fiercely attacked, and even devoured. My own father had such an adventure in his youth, but fortunately succeeded in wounding and driving away the savage beast.

It is especially in seasons of warfare, on the battle-field, and in the massacre of the inhabitants of towns and villages, that hyenas revel and feast upon the bodies of the slain. At such times, not only these hateful beasts, but four-footed and feathered scavengers of every kind collect together from great distances,* and for a long period infest the districts to which they were thus attracted. We find a striking example of this in the Syrian massacres of 1860. The sect of the Druses, exasperated by the boasted plans of the Maronites, or papal Christians of the mountains, that they would soon, with the aid of France, bring them completely under their power, and set on by the bigoted Muslim rulers of the country, rose upon the Christian population of every sect, and put to death in cold blood no less than eleven thousand persons, mostly men. Their bodies, left unburied, became the prey of ravenous birds and beasts of the field, which multiplied in some districts to such a degree as to make it unsafe for men to go about unarmed. In the large village of Hosbayah, on Mount Hermon, where the victims are said to have amounted to twelve hundred, hyenas have so greatly multiplied that not long since the inhabitants dared not leave their houses at night for fear of the hyenas that prowled in the streets, hiding by day amidst the ruins of the burned dwellings.†

The wolf may be classed among the scavengers, for he indulges in the eating of carrion whenever opportunity offers. He is chiefly, however, known as a fierce and voracious enemy

* 2 Sam. xxi., 9, 10; Ezek. xxxix., 17-20.

† Deut. vii., 22; 2 Kings xvii., 25, 26.

of the shepherd and his flock. This animal is common in Syria and Palestine, not only upon the wooded heights of Lebanon and Carmel, but in Judea as well, where he hides on the rocky heights and in the thickets of the plain by day, and ranges over the country by night in search of prey.

Kitto's "Encyclopædia" is evidently at fault in claiming that the true wolf is not at present found in the Holy Land, and that the only species now existing there is not gregarious, and is so small that it can not carry off a lamb or sheep. The animal to which he refers is probably the same as is called by the Greeks of Asia Minor "lyco chakalos," whose solitary cry we have often heard, but have never succeeded in getting a sight of him.

The wolf varies in color with age. He is usually tawny, with long black hair thinly scattered on the upper part of the body, and so closely resembles the more respectable street-dogs of Turkey as easily to be taken for them. The full-grown male is more than thirty inches high, and of a gray color, turning nearly white with age, when he looks exceedingly like the best breed of shepherd-dogs. This animal is gregarious, each pack consisting of from six to twelve individuals—probably constituting one family, for thus does the number of a litter vary. Half a dozen males sometimes forage together, and frequent the same lair, appearing to have no family ties. It is a singular fact that the wolf seems to be the only animal in South-western Asia that becomes spontaneously rabid. When in this state, he rushes fearlessly at man and beast, and will even watch on the road to bite the passer-by. A few years ago hydrophobia became very prevalent in a certain district of Asia Minor; so that not only men and dogs were affected by it, but almost every species of animal suffered in consequence—cattle and donkeys rushing madly through the fields, biting whatever came in their way. The disease was traced to some wolves, which were known to have rushed down the mountain, and to have bitten shepherds' dogs, sheep, and cattle.

We have already spoken of the ravages committed by wolves upon flocks of sheep and goats,* and will only add here that their attacks are made chiefly in the night, and in dark and

* John x., 12.

stormy weather;* and that the creature is powerful enough to carry off a sheep after killing it.

The wolf is not satisfied, however, with the food thus obtained. When winter sets in, and snow covers the mountains, the flocks are kept under shelter, and are either fed in the stables, or taken out only in broad daylight. Wolves then grow bold and ravenous with lack of food. They even attack travelers upon the highway, not in large packs, as in Russia or in the forests of Germany, still in numbers sufficient to overpower single foot-passengers as they cross the mountains. We have known wolves in winter to enter a large town in the night, and, in spite of the dogs, pick up whatever food they could find in the streets. We even remember an instance of a family who were sitting at their evening meal, when a wolf walked boldly into the room and sought to share their food.

At this season of the year the wolves upon all the high mountains live mostly by hunting; for as the sharp hoofs of the wild boar, the stag, and even the lighter deer sink into the snow, they are taken at great disadvantage by their ravenous enemies, who glide over the frozen crust with ease, pursue them in packs, drive them to some precipice, and force them to leap headlong from its brink, after which they descend to the bottom and feast upon their mangled bodies. The stags and the deer, when thus relentlessly pressed, instinctively feel that man alone can save them from their foes, and make for the nearest hamlet. They are not unfrequently found in the morning within the walls of the cattle-yard, or stabled with the oxen and sheep. We were once crossing a snow-covered mountain on foot, when we came upon the recent tracks of a herd of stags mingled with those of numerous wolves. Curious to read in these novel characters the story of a wild episode, we followed the tracks for some distance, and soon found that one of the younger deer had evidently become separated from the rest, and, thus singled out, had been pursued by the whole relentless pack. The poor creature had then turned down the mountain, and, after some extraordinary leaps and dodges, had succeeded in reaching the broad path of the wood-cutters, which led to the village; but, alas! at a distance of not more

* Jer. v., 6; Hab. i., 8; Zeph. iii., 3.

than a hundred yards from the nearest houses we came upon evident traces of the closing struggle. The snow was trampled down over a considerable surface, and bunches of the stag's hair were scattered in every direction, but not even a bone remained to tell the tale.

The ferocious and untamable character of the wolf renders him a fitting object of comparison, of which the Scripture writers have not unfrequently availed themselves;* and the contrast between the wolf and the lamb is used graphically to express the difference between the character of the wicked and that of the righteous, as well as to portray the genuine effects of the doctrine of Christ.† The well-known fable of the wolf that charged the lamb with troubling the water, though standing lower down the stream, and found in this a reason for devouring it, appears to have an Oriental origin. It is well known, and often repeated among the people of South-western Asia.

The dog has already been spoken of in connection with the flocks of goats and sheep, which he is employed to protect against their numerous enemies. We have also described the light and beautiful greyhound, so frequently seen among the nomads, and kept by wealthy proprietors for hunting hares and gazelles, as the hawk is for other game. These two species of canines, however, comprise but a very small portion of the dogs of South-western Asia. It is a fact, both singular in itself, and illustrative of the limits of the influence exerted by those who have ruled the human mind with most despotic sway, that although Mohammed once doomed the entire canine race to destruction, and subsequently made an exception in favor of hunting-dogs alone, yet there is no portion of the world in which dogs are more numerous, or are treated, on the whole, with more "personal consideration," than where the Muslim religion prevails.

The common dog of Turkey is of every imaginable size, color, form, and breed, including the rejected shepherd-dog and homeless greyhound, as well as a race of curs which seem to be but half-domesticated wolves and jackals. They have taken

* Gen. xlix., 27; Ezek. xxii., 27; Matt. vii., 15; Acts xx., 29.

† Luke x., 3; Isa. xi., 6.

possession of the entire country to devour its offal, and consume the carcass of every dead creature; and though their operations are limited to the city, village, or hamlet, not omitting the solitary farm-house and flour-mill, yet so keen is their scent, that not a mule, horse, or camel can perish upon the highway, except in uninhabited districts, without at least half a dozen of these hungry customers immediately appearing on the ground, ready to commence operations.* They reconcile the population to their homely and often annoying presence by saving them the trouble of removing their refuse and garbage beyond the street door, and by practicing a system of police which gives public notice of the movements of every stranger. Every street and neighborhood seems to be apportioned by common consent to a particular pack of curs, which enjoys, as a perquisite, all its refuse matter, and is expected to perform the duty of defending its inhabitants against "all comers," both by barking and biting. Within their own domain they feel perfectly at home, entering the houses and courts, or lying down in the middle of the street with the expectation that every passer-by will turn out for them. But as soon as they go beyond their limits, they become guilty of trespass, and are set upon by all the dogs of the adjoining district. Should a strange dog, however, pass through the streets, all such limits are forgotten in a general attack of the entire canine population upon the daring intruder. At night their barking is unceasing, and they respond to each other's cry as if to show that they are on the alert.† Should a belated traveler enter the town, his progress through the streets can be certainly known by the furious barking that salutes him as he proceeds.

In all the smaller towns and villages, where there is no police, a beast of burden dying in the street is left to be devoured by the dogs, which is very shortly accomplished; elsewhere it is simply dragged to the nearest dunghill. Sheep and goats are often slaughtered in the street, and the blood is licked up by the dogs.‡ Drunken strangers, reeling homeward late in the night, have been overpowered by them, and devoured before morning;§ and when the town has been invaded by an

* Jer. xv., 3.

† Psa. lix., 6.

‡ 1 Kings xxi., 19; xxii., 38; Psa. lxxviii., 23.

§ 2 Kings ix., 35, 36.

enemy, these same hungry brutes first feed upon the dead bodies in the street, and then enter the very houses to search for more.*

The people regard the common street dog both as a nuisance and a necessity. They at times curse him, throw stones at him, and attack him with a stick;† and one can see lying about a butcher's stall curs of every size that have been cruelly wounded or maimed by his axe or knife, while, on the other hand, this very butcher finds it convenient to cast out to them all the refuse of his shop. The housewife, standing at her door, calls them to consume the remains of the family meal which she scrapes out of her copper saucepan. She even encourages a particular favorite to lie down beside the door, or in a corner of her yard. Wealthy Muslims often leave, at their death, large sums of money to be used in the daily distribution of food to the dogs, and these may be seen flocking in large numbers from considerable distances at the appointed hour. Such a legacy is doubtless expected to be put down at the judgment on the credit side of the miscreant's account, who gives to the dogs what he robbed from the poor. The Muslims make it, in some sort, criminal to kill a dog, though superannuated or diseased, or to destroy a litter of pups that have accidentally lost their mother; so they are left to die a lingering death by hunger. Some years ago, the dogs of Tophaneh, at Constantinople, had become so numerous as to be declared by all an intolerable nuisance. Poison and other remedies were proposed, but the Ulemas pronounced them unlawful. Finally, in accordance with their advice, a vessel of considerable size was chartered, and hundreds of dogs were enticed on board. It sailed to one of the rocky, desert islands of the Marmora, where the unsuspecting canines were landed; a feast was spread before them, and the ship departed, leaving them to their fate. It was deemed no impropriety thus to abandon the poor brutes to perish by hunger, or fall to devouring one another.

The foregoing statements explain the apparent discrepancy which readers of the Scriptures can not fail to have noticed between the toleration and employment of this animal by the Hebrews, and the terms of contempt in which they often speak

* 1 Kings xiv., 11.

† 1 Sam. xvii., 43.

of him. They used him as a watch, and to guard their flocks,* and at the same time the term "dog" was as much an expression of contempt as it now is throughout Western Asia.† The true explanation for what appears to Occidentals a very unaccountable ill-treatment, as well as an excessive toleration of this useful animal, is to be found in the universally prevalent idea of uncleanness produced by his touch. Even the sportsman and the shepherd, who would not part with his dog on any consideration, never pets him, but keeps him at a distance; and this feeling prevails, not among the devout or superstitious alone, but with free-thinkers and the irreligious as well.‡ It may perhaps be partly accounted for by his scavenger propensities and habits; but he is also regarded as the type of lewdness, which in the Armenian tongue is called *shnootune*, from *shoon*, a dog.§

The jackal and the fox were called in Hebrew by one and the same name, "shual," which denotes a burrowing animal.|| This is not strange, for the Scriptures do not contain a system of natural history; they simply call things by the names used among the people whom they address, in order to instruct them upon matters of much greater importance. We have already pointed out the fact that the term *leviathan* is used in a generic sense, to denote several creatures which have very little in common. The jackal and the fox, however, in many respects resemble each other, so that they are easily mistaken the one for the other by an unpracticed eye. They both burrow in the ground, and their holes can not be told apart. They also alike frequent old ruins. We have started up the jackal amidst the fallen temples of Baalbec and other remains of antiquity, and have repeatedly spied the fox running along the top of an old wall.¶ They are the same reddish-fawn color, and do not differ in size, but the jackal has much longer legs, so that he stands higher, while his tail is but half the size of the fox's brush; he has, moreover, nothing of Reynard's sleek and sly appearance. The fur of the latter is an important article of commerce, being used in all parts of the country for lining winter garments, while the skin of the jackal is worthless.

* Isa. lvi., 10; Job xxx., 1.

† Lane, i., p. 120.

‡ Matt. viii., 20.

† 1 Sam. xxiv., 14; 2 Kings viii., 13.

§ Deut. xxiii., 18; Rev. xxii., 15.

¶ Neh. iv., 3; Lam. v., 18.

Again, the jackal is gregarious, while the fox is solitary. The former seems to be confined to the vicinity of the sea, for he exists along the whole coast of Asia Minor, from Batoom round to Alexandretta, and down the coast of Palestine to Egypt; but we have never met him more than fifty miles from the shore; this does not, however, apply to Mesopotamia, for he is found in considerable numbers near Mossul. Reynard also abounds in the same localities, but completely displaces the jackal farther inland, where he greatly abounds.



Jackal.



Syrian Fox.

The jackal is a dirty animal, which prefers carrion to any other food, and often displays great cunning in securing it. Between him and the dogs there is a standing feud; they are too strong for him, and to cope with them he is obliged to outwit them. Soon after sunset he creeps out of his hole, and utters a few plaintive yelps, which are answered by a similar cry, and then by another, in rapidly increasing succession, until they swell to one grand chorus of doleful sounds. These cries are signals which bring them together at some convenient spot, where a consultation seems to be held respecting the plan of operations for the night. The dogs, meantime, have rushed in the direction of the jackals' cry, and have set up a loud barking in opposition, thus distinctly revealing their whereabouts. They are kept on the alert, and at a distance from the carrion, by the jackals setting up from time to time their chorus; these all the while, each in his turn, silently and slyly slip away, to take a share of the coveted feast. They play the same game in order to get at the grapes, of which they are excessively fond; and vineyards which are at a considerable distance from a village require a constant watch and guard

during the fruit season, or they are completely devoured by the jackals.*

This animal is rarely shot by the hunter, but he is sometimes caught in traps,† and is considered untamable. The Scriptural account of the expedient, by means of which Samson inflicted such severe injury upon the Philistines, is generally supposed to contain difficulties which do not seem to us to exist in point of fact. We should bear in mind that Samson was the chief magistrate of the Israelites, so that there could be no difficulty in the way of his collecting a very large number of these animals, even within a very short time, if necessary; but we need not suppose that the jackals were all let loose *at once* in the fields of the Philistines, nor in the same part of their territory. It was probably an attempt on the part of Samson and his co-adjutors to cause their enemies to suffer the horrors of famine rather than a petty revenge, which would affect only a limited number. So great an injury could not have been inflicted on their enemies had the Israelites fired their crops with their own hands, for the latter were confined to the hill country by their more powerful enemies; and even had they partially succeeded, the damage done would have been limited in extent. The plan of tying the tails of two jackals together was certainly a most effectual means of attaining the object, as any one will testify who has ever seen the experiment tried. A single animal carrying a fire-brand would soon extinguish it, while two would not only be impeded in their progress, but would find no hole sufficiently large to admit them both at once; and so would continue rushing wildly through the land, setting fire to the sheaves of wheat and also to that still standing, together with the vineyards and the olives; the Philistines, moreover, would find it impossible to seize the authors of the terrible mischief. These fire-brands were doubtless pieces of the pitch-pine of the country, which, once lighted, are put out with difficulty.

Some have claimed that jackals did not exist in Bible times, and are not referred to in the Scriptures; they suppose that these animals came from India, and appeared in Western Asia after the commencement of the Christian era. Such a state-

* Cant. ii., 15.

† Judg. xv., 4.

ment, however, is not only extremely improbable, and without a parallel in natural history, but is quite incorrect, at least as far as regards the Old Testament; for the word *ayim* (howlers), improperly rendered "wild beasts of the islands" in Isa. xiii., 22, and Jer. l., 39, is supposed to refer distinctly to troops of jackals; while *shual* and *shualim* are employed indiscriminately to indicate either jackals or foxes. *Aij* or *aoo* is an exact imitation of the cry of the former.

The number of these animals depends upon the amount of food afforded by the district they frequent; so that the Palestine of to-day does not probably contain as many of them as did the Palestine of the Hebrew judges. We have ourselves, in Syria, listened to the startling midnight chorus of bands of jackals, whose numbers could not have fallen far short of Samson's instruments of revenge. As they are most fond of carrion, however, they greatly increase in times of war. Thus David, speaking of his unrighteous enemies, says: "They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes"—read jackals; for the latter come in troops to devour the dead, while the solitary fox prefers to kill his own prey.*

Jackals are, we believe, more numerous in their own district than are foxes where *they* most abound; yet of the numbers of the latter some estimate may be formed from the fact that, in the outskirts of a single town in Asia Minor, no less than three hundred foxes were shot during a single fortnight, when a slight fall of snow covered the ground, and enabled the sportsmen to distinguish them in the darkness of the night.

The fox is also distinctly alluded to in the Scriptures, and our Saviour evidently compares Herod to this animal.† He is still considered to be the type of cunning; and the Eastern proverbs and fables which have Master Reynard for their theme represent him as characterized by the same traits as do those of Western lands.

Fable itself, so far as it endows the brute creation with the power of speech, appears to have been originally an Oriental conceit, arising from an idea, still prevalent among all classes, that both animals and birds are able to communicate their ideas as intelligibly as man. This is seen in the stories similar

* Psa. lxiii., 10.

† Luke xiii., 32.

to the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," which the people are accustomed to recount, bearing many of them the impress of a high antiquity, and is also noticeable in the expressions they habitually employ respecting the brutes. But the tales told of the fox among the people of the East differ from those current in Western lands in this respect, namely, that the former invariably represent him as finally outwitted in spite of all his wiles, while the latter ever bring him out successful. There are, for instance, many stories of the fox and the magpie, in which the latter is sure to get the best of it. The European fable of the race between the hare and the tortoise is with Orientals a race between the fox and the crab, in which the latter held on to Reynard's tail, and cried out "tally" as soon as they arrived at the goal, thus winning the race by ten seconds; the decision pending on the result of this trial of speed, in accordance with the sly proposition of Reynard himself, was as to which of them should have the wheat and which the chaff of the crop they had raised in partnership.

The red-legged partridge is considered a very silly bird, and very proud of her song. The following may be taken as a specimen of the stories told at the expense of Master Reynard by the Oriental farmers, upon whom he retaliates by stealing their chickens: A partridge sat singing on the top of a rock, when a fox, slyly creeping up, feigned to be greatly charmed with her song. When within a few feet of her, he exclaimed, "I don't believe you could sing so delightfully with your eyes shut." "Oh! yes, I could," answered the silly bird; and, closing her eyes, she was the next moment in the fox's mouth. "Well, you've got me now!" she exclaimed; "but you must acknowledge you do not often feed on so dainty a morsel; you should at least give thanks to God for it." The fox just opened his mouth to say, "Praise be to God," when the partridge, uttering her well-known chuckle, flew away.

The mouse designates a number of small animals which do not seem to have been distinguished by specific names among the Hebrews, for their word "*akh-bar*" signifies *corn-devourer*, and is applicable to a variety of rodents inhabiting both the house and the field. We shall notice several of these animals, without confining ourselves to those which may be strictly considered as coming under the designation of scavengers.

This seems essential to the completeness of our picture of Bible lands.

No one can have dwelt long in Western Asia without remarking the important place occupied by the house-rats in the economy of nature. They are silent during the day, and seem to lie asleep in their holes; but no sooner has the sun gone down than they come out in search of food. The dog carries off the more bulky and coarse refuse of the town, but the rats eat every thing. They grow to such a size, and move about in such large numbers, that cats uniformly avoid them. Not content with the depredations they commit in the cellar, basement, and yard, they go higher, and, piercing every floor, ransack the house from garret to cellar; they invade cupboards and closets, devour or carry off whatever is left exposed, and sometimes attack the fingers, toes, and faces of little children in their beds. In districts where the houses are built of wood, time alone can accustom the inhabitants to endure the noise they make at night gnawing holes through the floors, running up and down in the partition-walls, or ranging over the garret; and when the building is large and old the roof becomes haunted by weasels, which pursue the rats all night long, adding to the racket the piercing squeals of the combatants, to the no small discomfort of any unaccustomed guest. Every housewife has her own story to tell of the depredations and feats of these voracious and impudent scavengers; and we have often been amazed, not only at their incessant activity and voracity, but still more at the wonderful ingenuity they display in accomplishing their object. We have known them, for instance, to carry off unbroken several eggs from the top of a shelf up a high, straight wall to a hole in the ceiling above. This was accomplished by one of them lying down on his back, and clasping the eggs, each in turn, with his four feet, when the other rats, seizing him by the tail, hauled him up the wall and through the hole. This is the animal called by naturalists the *brown rat*, which multiplies with such amazing rapidity that, were it not for its numerous foes, a single pair would increase to nearly a thousand individuals in one year. This animal is supposed to have originated in Persia, and to have spread throughout Western Asia, from whose shores it swam to the shipping bound to foreign parts, and thus invaded

Europe, making its appearance in Paris in the eighteenth century.

It is interesting to notice that as long as the bulk of mankind were massed in the oldest provinces of Asia this animal was confined to that continent; but when devastating wars had diminished the number of its inhabitants, and Europe became the favorite abode of men, the rat emigrated westward, and made the capitals of civilization the centre of its operations. There seems also to have been a similar emigration eastward into the crowded provinces of China.

The mouse is also extremely common in Western Asia, and the Mosaic prohibition of its flesh continues to be generally observed.* We should not, however, wonder at the necessity of such a prohibition, nor be surprised at the statement contained in Isa. lxvi., 17. We have reason to believe that those who have tasted the flesh of the mouse acquire as great a relish for it, as the Frenchman does for his frog diet, or the German for *sauerkraut*. We once had a servant from one of the Greek islands who was addicted to this habit, and could be induced to relinquish it neither by expostulation nor by ridicule. The only class in Turkey now who habitually eat the mouse are the gypsies, and they make no secret of it.

The only kind of squirrel known in this country is about the size of a common rat, and of a reddish-fawn color, with a line of brown commencing between the ears and running down the back. They are usually found upon walnut-trees or in their vicinity, and are not generally eaten. The jerboa is a miniature kangaroo, or a squirrel upon stilts. It is a beautiful little creature, closely resembling the common squirrel of the country, but has very long hind-legs, that enable it to take great leaps, with the aid of its long and powerful tail, which is covered with short hair, and terminates in a delicate fan-like tuft. Its ears are very long and diaphanous, and its eyes large. It is extremely timid, and leaps away at the slightest appearance of danger. This curious and interesting little animal exists in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and Northern Africa. It appears to be nowhere found in large numbers, and is eaten by the Arabs of the desert.

* Lev. xi., 29.



The Jerboa.

The short-tailed field-mouse, as he is called by naturalists, abounds throughout Western Asia, and must be endowed with great powers of increase, for he has many enemies. The owl is after him by night, and by day the hawk, with other birds of prey, flutters in the sky, and comes down with a swoop, and carries him off to his nest, while the indefatigable little ferret creeps into his hole, successfully encountering him, and destroying his little ones; yet he seems in nowise diminished. You see him in all the arable lands, running across the fields, industriously carrying off the grain to stow it away for winter, chirping gayly from time to time, sitting up on his haunches to get a good sight of you as you approach, and then suddenly diving into his hole. This animal is apt so greatly to multiply as at times to cause a sensible diminution of the crops, and its ravages are more generally dreaded than those of the mole. A perfectly trustworthy friend has informed us that in 1863, being on the farm (*chiftlik*) of an acquaintance in Western Asia Minor, he saw about noon the depredations committed by an immense number of these mice, which passed over the ground

like an army of young locusts. Fields of standing corn and barley disappeared in an incredibly short space of time; and as for vines and mulberry-trees, they were gnawed at the roots and speedily prostrated. The annual produce of a farm of one hundred and fifty acres, which promised to be unusually large, was thus utterly consumed; and the neighboring farms suffered equally. Such, in all probability, were the mice that marred the land of the Philistines.* They had tried every means to check their devastations, but in vain. They concluded that "the hand of the God of Israel was against them," because of "the ark" which they had taken; and in accordance with a custom prevalent among idolaters, and inherited from them by the papists, they sought to appease him with a trespass-offering of five golden images of the instruments of their scourge, one for each of the lords, or sheikhs, of the states which constituted their commonwealth.†



The Ferret.

It is either the field-mouse or the Persian rat which committed such ravages in Palestine about the year 1132 as are described by the historians of the Crusades. They are said to have been so ravenous "as to climb on the backs of the cattle and begin to eat their flesh!"‡

* 1 Sam. vi., 5.

† 1 Sam. vi., 4.

‡ Michaud, "Histoire des Croisades," vol. i., p. 337, note.

CHAPTER XI.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

WE have often been struck with the great numbers of birds, particularly of the smaller species, which inhabit Western Asia, as compared with Europe and North America. We have so often made this observation upon the three continents, that it seems to be a fact settled beyond a doubt. The most natural explanation of this circumstance lies in the fact that the feathered tribe, even those of feeblest wing, have an easy road from Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by the Isthmus of Suez, and over the narrow Red Sea, to their winter-quarters in tropical Africa, while nature has provided them with extraordinary means of conveyance from Asia Minor southward across the Mediterranean, which will presently be described.

But there are many birds, even of small size, whose strong wing enables them to disregard distance and other impediments in the way, and this is pre-eminently true of the swallow, which abounds in all parts of Western Asia. There are several species of this bird, some of which inhabit the crags and caves of the mountains, while others frequent the banks of streams; but we shall notice here only the common swallow, which chiefly haunts the abodes of men. These birds are freely admitted everywhere, and not only make their nests against the ceilings of balconies, halls, and private apartments, but find their way into the grated windows of the Christian churches and mosks, and rear their young unmolested in tombs and houses of prayer.* In this passage, the words "hath found a nest" refer to the fact that the swallow uses the same nest year after year, only repairing it; and it is worthy of note that both the swallow and the sparrow may still be seen fluttering and rearing their broods about the so-called Mosk of Omar in Jerusalem, as well as the buildings which occupy the

* Psa. lxxxiv., 3.



Oriental Swallows and Nest. (Psa. lxxxiv., 3.)

site of Solomon's Temple. In all these haunts the cheerful twittering of the swallows may be heard, as they occasionally stop to rest in the midst of their family cares. There is also a plaintiveness in their chattering (referred to in Isa. xxxviii., 14) like the sobbing of a little child. They are busy all summer long rearing their two successive broods, flitting and darting in all directions, collecting materials for their nests, or food for their progeny.

Whither do they go when they disappear in the autumn? One species lies dormant in crags and holes during the winter; but nearly all, and particularly the kind just described, are well known to fly away to milder climes. They return every spring with unerring instinct to the same nest, as we have ourselves proved by tying a scarlet thread to the leg of one of them.* We were once becalmed in the spring season on board a sailing ship between the island of Malta and the African coast. Great numbers of swallows alighted on the vessel, arriving

* Jer. viii., 7.

from the south, and when they left us, flew to the north. They seemed glad of rest, and some of them fluttered about the deck in the most familiar manner, even entering the cabin, probably in quest of flies to appease their hunger. Some hawks and wild pigeons also alighted in the rigging, all bound in the same direction. We easily caught several of these weary swallows, and gave them their liberty again. A lad of our company was standing at the stern of the ship with a swallow upon his finger, when a hawk darted down, swift as a shot, from the mast-head, caught the bird off from his hand, and, flying back to the rigging, began to devour it. We boys on board (for I was then but a lad) appealed to the sailors against this wanton cruelty, as we regarded it, and one kind-hearted tar sprang into the rigging, crept cautiously toward the weary bird, and caught him with his hand; the swallow's severed head was in his mouth, and the body in his talons. A fellow-sailor meanwhile had in like manner seized another hawk; and then, to gratify our boyish sense of justice, they fastened the foot of one hawk to that of the other with a string only a few inches in length, and tossed them into the air. Though in so awkward a plight, each alternately rising or falling, yet they flew with amazing rapidity toward Africa, probably on account of its being either the nearest or the most familiar shore, and were soon quite lost to sight.

Both the sparrow-hawk and several species of wild pigeon have migratory habits, and we can easily conceive that they can cross over from Egypt into Asia Minor. The incident related above proves that the swallow in like manner, and many other birds of similar powers of flight, need not follow the circuit of the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, but are able to cross over its entire breadth, especially by taking advantage of a favorable wind. But many birds are quite incapable of flying over a surface of three hundred and fifty miles from headland to headland across the Mediterranean, without alighting, and would require many days, and even weeks, to perform the trip through Syria and Palestine. Such are, for instance, the ortolans, the darnagas, the bee-figs of various species, the wren, the titmouse, the smaller thrushes and finches, with a hundred other diminutive specimens of the feathered tribes. These, after breeding in the spring and early summer, feed in the

vineyards and olive-yards, crowd about the terebinth-trees, and pick up all kinds of seeds and insects in the fields; and as the severity of the winter would be fatal to them, not only in Asia Minor, but even in Syria and Palestine, He who is ever mindful of the smallest of his creatures has provided them with means of transportation to a more genial clime. Many of them, indeed, find their way downward from Palestine into Arabia and Egypt, but this would be difficult, if not impossible, where lofty mountains and broad seas intervene; and to meet such cases the crane has been provided. This is a large bird with long neck and legs, whose body is of a bluish slate color, while the wings are black. It is gregarious, keeping together in companies of twenty to one hundred in number; it feeds in swampy grounds, away from human habitations, and is very shy and wary. A few of these birds remain the year round in the same locality, choosing an extensive marsh, whose position enables them to perceive the approach of an enemy. Most of them, however, are migratory. In the autumn, numerous flocks may be seen coming from the north with the first cold blasts from that quarter, flying low, and uttering a peculiar cry as if of alarm, as they circle over the cultivated plains. Little birds of every species may then be seen flying



The Crane. (Jer. viii., 7.)

up to them, while the twittering songs of those already comfortably settled upon their backs may be distinctly heard. On their return in the spring, they fly high, apparently considering that their little passengers can easily find their way down to the earth.

The cranes do not fly in a single straight line, like wild geese or ducks, but in forked lines, and the leader may occasionally be

seen falling back to the rear, his place being taken by the next bird in the line. When they first rise in the air from their camping-ground, they fly about in the greatest confusion, like a caravan of camels or mules preparing for a start; but they soon fall into line, and proceed more regularly than a caravan which threads its way across the desert. The crane was known to the Hebrews, and the regularity of its migrations had attracted their notice, though their country lay in the pathway of but a small number of these birds.*

Most species of the birds of passage may be able to perform their own migrations;† and we shall now proceed to mention the chief of those referred to in the Scriptures or particularly characteristic of the country.

The sparrow is generally supposed to be stationary, though its diminished numbers in the winter would lead to the inference that it is partially migratory. There can be no truer picture than the Psalmist's description of the sparrows "on the house-tops,‡ whose edge is ever their favorite station. There they sit, or hop about and chirp, sharpen their little bills, or carry on their little quarrels; and when the coast is clear in the yard below down they fly in a body, to pick up any crumbs or scraps of food they may chance to find. We often thought in childhood that the solitary sparrow, so frequently seen in winter alone on the house-top, must feel very sad, bereft as he seemed to be of its garrulous and merry companions; others have made the same observation, and the Psalmist's words cited above are of a similar tenor, for, despite the suggestions of some commentators, the statement is applicable to no other bird in Palestine.

Sparrows, as well as swallows, are allowed to build their nests about the house; and being stronger than the swallow, often take forcible possession of its nest, ruthlessly casting out its unhatched eggs. As soon, however, as the crops begin to ripen in the fields, they leave the habitations of men, and seek more abundant food among the standing grain. They hover,

* Jer. viii., 7.

† In the islands of South-eastern Asia, "we learn that an arm of the sea, twenty-five miles wide, serves to limit the range even of birds of considerable powers of flight."—WALLACE, "Malay Archipelago," p. 324.

‡ Psa. cii., 7.

like little clouds, over the fields of wheat, barley, millet, and sesame-seed, and settle down more especially on the trees and bushes which adjoin the threshing-floors. About sunset hundreds of them collect in the dense old cypress-trees, and it takes them some time to settle their disputes about their roosts and sleeping-quarters. The farmers reckon the sparrow as one of the chief enemies of their crops, and it not unfrequently happens that these voracious little thieves leave barely enough to pay the government taxes.

Sparrows are caught for the market, mostly by children, either by means of little cages whose doors close with a spring, or with twigs besmeared with bird-lime placed among the branches of trees. They are sold at the smallest price fetched by any game.* A comparison of these two passages recalls the custom, still universal in the East, of throwing in something extra in consideration of a larger purchase. It is also interesting to note that the sparrow was the smallest living creature offered in sacrifice under the Mosaic dispensation. It was the cleansed leper who, having been separated from his people as unclean, and thus usually reduced to great penury, was allowed to bring an offering of so little value.†

The quail does not appear much larger than the sparrow, but its body is fuller and rounder. It closely resembles the partridge in its general form and shape, and its flesh is highly esteemed. These birds are migratory, and move in immense numbers, often amounting to several thousands. They begin to leave Africa in the early spring, and breed on the elevated plains of Asia Minor, Koordistan, European Turkey, and Southern Russia. Their peculiar whistle may be heard all summer long, in the midst of the sown wheat or barley, and so actively do they lead about their little broods that their enemies can rarely seize them. In the autumn, about the 1st of September, they begin to migrate southward. They are then very numerous, and rise like a cloud from the fields, pursuing their flight only in the night with a favorable wind, and alighting



The Oriental Quail. (Psa. cv., 40.)

* Matt. x., 29; Luke xii., 6.

† Lev. xiv., 4.

from time to time for rest and food. They may occasionally be seen after sunset, and before it is quite dark, passing as a cloud in the sky. When crossing over any considerable expanse of water, they always make for a particular headland, unless driven to some other point by a change of wind; for their wings and tails being very short, quails can simply keep before the breeze. They are also guided by certain landmarks in their progress overland. The people light fires by night on the summit of the passes in the mountains over which they are known to fly, so that the birds, attracted by the light, descend and fall into their hands. But they are most easily captured when they first alight upon the shore after crossing the Black Sea or the Mediterranean. They are then sought for in the night with lanterns held near the ground, and the weary birds, running toward the light, are easily caught with the hand and thrust into bags. Indeed the immense numbers annually captured in a variety of ways, or shot for food, can not fall far short of those of the herrings caught in the Northern seas. But few of these birds probably pass *directly* over from Asia Minor to Africa; many stop on their way at the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus, and still larger numbers pass over Syria and Palestine, and cross the Red Sea, to winter in Upper Egypt and Nubia.

The quails which came up and covered the camp of the Israelites, while pitched in the desert of Sin, with high mountains on the east and north, doubtless came over the Red Sea from the south, following their spring migration, and alighting to rest upon the shore, before attempting to pass over the mountains, in their progress toward the north.* One year and seven days later the Israelites were again fed with quails; but no reader of the Bible account can avoid the conviction that there was something unusual and extraordinary in this instance which did not characterize the former.† The tents of Israel did not now lie on the sea-shore, where the quails stop in large numbers before taking their nightly flight over the mountains; they were pitched to the east of Sinai, near the upper end of a valley where their camping-ground is still marked by the fountain and palm-trees of *el Huderah* (Hazereth). Had the Israelites been encamped upon any of the regular

* Exod. xvi., 13.

† Numb. xi.

routes of the quails, Moses and many of his people could not have failed to be aware of the fact, which was not the case.* The chief agent employed in bringing about an anomaly in the present case, in the flight of these birds, is distinctly stated to have been a powerful wind, called in Psa. lxxviii., 26, "an east wind and a south wind." It was a "khamasin"† of extraordinary violence that prevented their passing over the high mountains of the peninsula, in their progress northward, and compelled them to fly low, on its eastern side, over the plain of the Muzeiny as far as *Ain el Huderah*, where their farther progress was arrested by the closing in of the valley, and by the wind which, striking the spurs of the *Jebel et Tih*, became an "east wind."‡ They here fluttered no higher than two cubits from the ground over the space of a day's journey in length and breadth, and were caught in vast numbers by the Israelites. The expression "two cubits high upon the face of the earth" does not, in our view, imply that the birds were heaped upon the ground to the height of three feet, for then the words, "he that gathered least, gathered ten homers," would be quite inadequate to convey an idea of their numbers. The disease consequent upon these events was perhaps the effect of decomposition by the sirocco of thousands of these birds that could not be collected, and died from lack of food and water within the space in which they were confined in such vast numbers; or their flesh may have become poisonous by their feeding upon certain plants still existing in Upper Egypt, from whence they came, which produce such an effect.

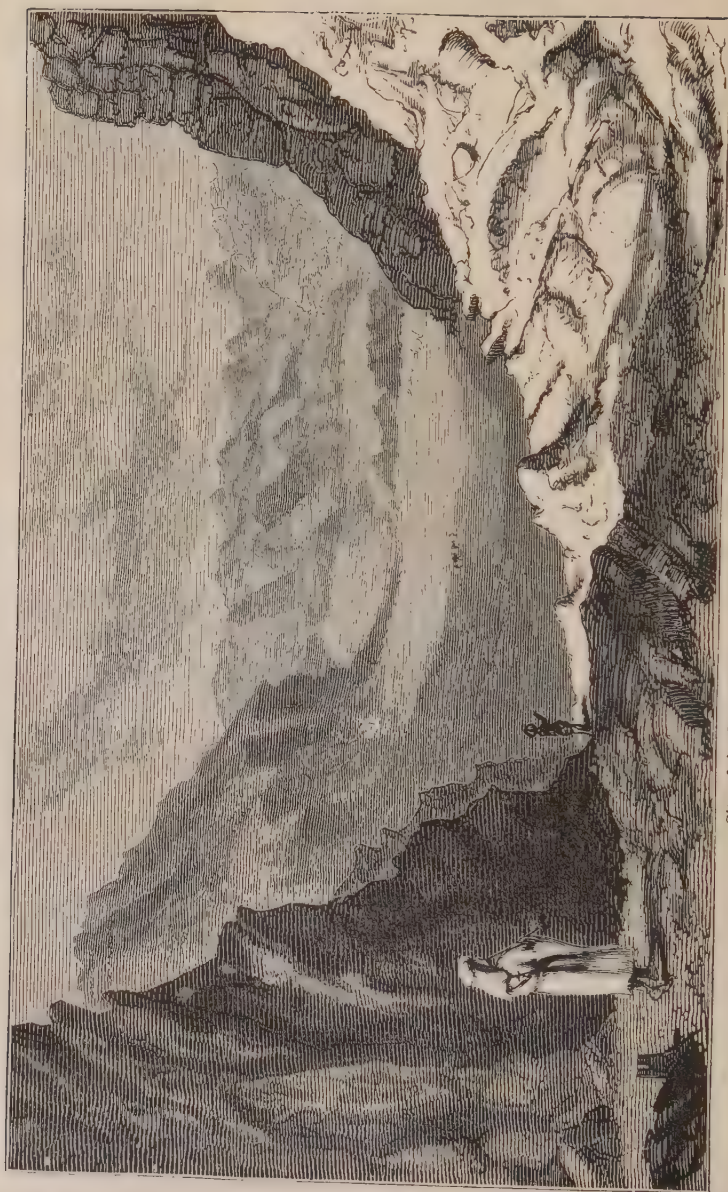
Lynch repeatedly found quails§ on the shore and floating upon the water of the Dead Sea, on the last days of April; and he gives an interesting account of the extraordinary workings of the sirocco, or "khamasin," among the surrounding mountains.

* Numb. xi., 21, 22.

† This is the name of the south-west wind which blows more or less during the *fifty days* (as its name indicates) from the time of the Oriental Easter to the Day of Pentecost—during which period occurred the two great flights of quails spoken of in the text—a twelvemonth apart.—LANE, "Modern Egyptians," vol. ii., p. 222.

‡ Robinson, vol. i., p. 151.

§ He took these quails for young birds, doubtless because he was only acquainted with the American species, which is larger. As the Eastern quail is born in July, it has obtained its full growth in the month of April.



Site of the Second Miracle of Quails. (Numb. xi., 31.)

Since writing the foregoing suggestions respecting the miraculous fall of quails in the second year of the Israelites' sojourn in the wilderness, we have seen a drawing of the *Ain Huderah* (Hazereth) in Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," page 214, which so aptly explains our idea of the matter that we here reproduce it, together with the following quotation from that valuable work: "Through a deep and rugged gorge, with almost perpendicular sides, we looked down upon a *wady* bed that winds along between fantastic sandstone rocks, now rising in the semblance of mighty walls or terraced palaces, now jutting out in pointed ridges—rocky promontories on a sandy sea. In the midst, beneath a lofty cliff, nestles the dark green palm-grove of Hazereth.* The fountain itself issues from the rock behind the grove." The author makes no reference to the quails, which renders his testimony all the more valuable.

One of the most common birds of passage which mark the seasons by their regular migrations, is the turtle-dove, repeatedly referred to in the Scriptures.† That it was common among the Hebrews, is proved by the fact that the poorer classes were permitted to offer, instead of a lamb, "two turtle-doves or two young pigeons," such as they were "able to get."‡

The dove includes two classes of birds, the pigeon and the turtle-dove. The former are always blue, with touches of white, or black and silvery, or even golden hues, according to the species.§ There is the wood-pigeon, twice the size of the common; the rock-pigeon, which builds its nest in natural caves,|| and in old dried-up wells and cisterns, and the half-tamed pigeon, which breeds in vast numbers in the "dove-cotes" erected on purpose for it in many of the towns and villages of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Persia.¶ This is the original stock from which has been derived a great variety of tame pigeons of every hue, and differing in other respects. Some of these have been brought from the East to Europe where they

* The vale and fountain of Hazereth may have been and may still be an occasional "camp" of the quails, when they go up the Gulf of Akaba. Stanley says that when he was there, "the sky was literally darkened by the flight of innumerable birds three feet high, with black and white wings" (storks?) "which he had seen in like numbers at the first cataract of the Nile."—"Sinai and Palestine," p. 82.

† Cant. ii., 12; Jer. viii., 7.

‡ Lev. xii., 8; xiv., 22.

§ Ps. lxxviii., 13.

|| Jer. xlviii., 28.

¶ Isa. lx., 8.

are well known and highly prized; as, for instance, the carrier-pigeon of Tarsus, the robber-pigeon, the tumbler, etc.*

The turtle-doves, too, are various, though less easily distinguished by their form and color. There is the palm-dove, which does not migrate like the rest, but builds its nest, often in large numbers, on the palm-trees, and was the variety doubtless accessible to the Israelites, during their wanderings in the wilderness. There is also another species, sometimes called the ring-dove, from the line of black and white encircling its throat; it does not migrate, but frequents unmolested the houses of the Muslims, and makes the shady cypress groves of the Turkish cemeteries resound with its plaintive cooing.†



A Pair of Turtle-doves. (Luke ii., 24.)

Its note resembles the pronunciation of the Greek words, Δέκα ὀκτώ (eighteen); hence its name "thekokhtoorá," which is associated with the following legend: A woman sent her daughter-in-law to the public oven with a number of loaves to be baked. When the daughter returned with the baking, her mother-in-law insisted that one loaf was missing, and fell to beating her most unmercifully. Some kind genius in pity interfered, and changed the persecuted daughter into a turtle-dove. She, still burdened with the memory of her former trials, continues to reiterate, "There were but *eighteen*."

The more common species of turtle-doves, however, come up from the South in the early spring, and gradually fill the whole land, not only of Palestine and Syria, but the whole peninsula of Asia Minor. Their mournful cooing may be heard, throughout the summer, in all the valleys and plains, particularly in the heat of the day, when large numbers of them

* Michaud, "Histoire des Croisades," vol. i., p. 197.

† Ezek. vii., 16.

seek the refreshing shade of the trees, or early in the morning, and at night, when they resort to the rocks at the foot of the hills.* They come down into every field of standing grain, and flutter about the threshing-floors; they start from every spring and water-course,† the silvery rustle of their wings, and the clear line of white and black upon their tails, as they pass overhead, distinguishing them from every other bird. They consume the crops, and yet are general favorites; and few sportsmen shoot them, though their flesh is not unsavory. Large numbers, however, are caught upon the islands of the Archipelago during their autumnal migrations, and are pickled in vinegar and spices.

The words in Matt. x., 16, "harmless as doves," and the passage in Matt. iii., 16, where the Holy Ghost is represented as "descending like a dove," are not to be understood as referring to the turtle-dove, but to the pigeon, which is the meaning of the original; the latter is not only equally harmless and peaceful, but is also easily tamed, which is not the case with the other.

The nightingale and blackbird (*Merula*) are the chief song birds of Western Asia. The former, which is a small variety of thrush, reddish-brown in color, is migratory, and from early spring until the month of June its melodious warblings may be heard issuing from the thick shade of trees and shrubs by the river banks, and from the gardens and wooded glens; for this delightful songster, which is rarely successfully caged, feeds upon the little worms and insects which abound by the shady water-courses, and often builds its nest in the rose-bushes of the garden, sure of immunity in return for its welcome music.‡ It is especially in bright moonlight nights that the notes of these captivating singers are clearest and loudest, and they seem to vie with each other until the air vibrates with the liquid melody. We have often not only been kept awake by them for hours, but have felt constrained to go forth the better to enjoy the harmonious contest. The imitative name "bul-bul" is applied in the East to all small birds of song, though primarily and *par excellence* to the nightingale. We have heard it given to the beautiful variegated little titmouse, whose curi-

* Isa. xxxviii., 14; lix., 11.

† Cant. v., 12.

‡ Psa. civ., 10, 12.



The Titmouse and its Nest.

ously constructed nest may often be seen hanging at the ends of the long willow-branches, swinging in the wind over the water of the streams.

The blackbird does not migrate. Its clearest and most cheerful note is heard at sunset of a cloudless day, when, perched on the top-most bough of a tall tree, or the summit of an isolated rock, it pours forth its far-re-sounding song.

To the foregoing list might be added several birds of pas-sage, which are familiarly known to the people: the oriole—the male of a bright yellow, with jet-black wings, and the female of a pale green—send forth their cheerful whistle as they flutter about the vineyards and the tere-binth-trees, on their way to the high valleys among the mountains, where they build their nests in the walnut groves; the bee-bird (*Sirens*) of variegated plumage, green, red, and yellow, whose note is heard high up in the sky, quite out of sight, and which, descending like an arrow, passes close by in its fitful

flight; the little blue-jay, which sits demurely upon the top of a grain stack, whence it flies noisily away; and the hoopoe, with its tall crest of red feathers tipped with black, which bows its head every time it utters its incessant “coo-cook.” All these,

and many other interesting birds we might name, are and have ever been regular visitors of the lands of the Bible, and are familiarly known to all classes of the people, and equally admired and loved by all.

The red-legged, or rock, partridge might well be classed among the warblers. It is, indeed, a larger bird than generally goes by that name; but it is kept in a cage simply for its song.



The Eastern Oriole.



The Hoopoe.

In many villages of the island of Scio, many of these birds are yearly caught and exported to Constantinople, Smyrna, and other cities.* In Western Asia the only birds kept in cages for their song are the blackbird and the partridge, with the rare exception of a goldfinch. The gray, or European, partridge is only found in the plains of Asia Minor; but the rock partridge is very com-

mon throughout the land in a wild state. It is referred to in 1 Sam. xxvi., 20, and Jer. xvii., 11. The last of these passages alludes to the habit of this bird of building its nest upon the ground, in the grass, or under the hedge of a mountain vineyard, so exposed that the foxes, rats, or boys often carry away the eggs, an event by which the poor bird is greatly distressed. Were it not for this, however, and for its many enemies, this bird would so increase as to become a nuisance. As it is, the

* We hear no more of the famous tame partridges of Scio, especially those of the villages of Ellata and Vassa, which "spend the day in the fields, and come home at night to the village: they follow the little boys to whom they belong, just like dogs, and fly from the village several times a day to search for their masters, each of whom keeps a whistle to call his own, and leads them out to feed; and they come whenever they hear the call." (Van Bruyn, p. 168; Thevenot, p. 100.) Too many travelers state the fact to doubt it in the main. We ourselves have long had a tame partridge running about in the house, which allowed the children to dress it up, and even to harness it to a little cart; but we never tried the experiment of taking it into the fields.

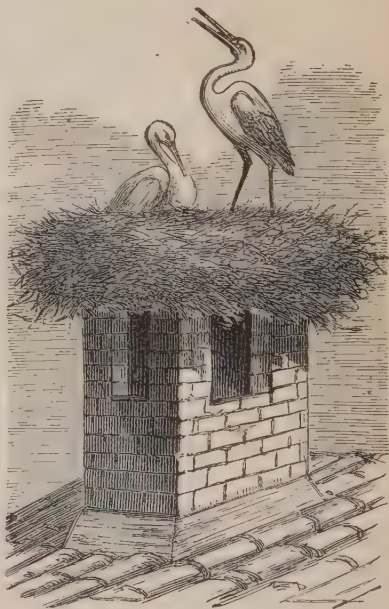


The Rock Partridge. (1 Sam. xxvi., 20.)

feet from the ground, is of a pure white, with jet-black wings, and with slender legs, and long bill of a bright red. This bird, especially the black variety, still makes the strong, spreading branches of the fir-tree her house;* but the Muslim notions of hospitality to bird and beast have encouraged her to build her broad, flat nest upon the roofs of houses and mosks, annually augmenting its height, until it resembles a little tower. The domes of village mosks are not unfrequently adorned with seven or eight of these unique appendages. Next to the swamp, the newly plowed field is the best harvest-ground of the stork. The plowmen may be seen accompanied by several of these birds stalking along close upon

crops are, in some districts, materially diminished by them, and the farmers implore the sportsmen to come to their aid. We ourselves have seen several hundred at once, feeding like chickens in the fields, devouring the newly-sown wheat.

But one of the most interesting birds of Western Asia is the common stork, which stands three



The Stork and its Nest. (Jer. viii., 7.)

* Psa. civ., 17.

his heels, intent upon picking up the grubs and worms uncovered by the plowshare. They also render themselves very useful in destroying reptiles, locusts, and other insects, which they devour with great avidity. These birds utter no cry, but have a curious way of standing upon their nests, spreading their wings wide, and throwing back their heads so as to touch their backs, while they rapidly strike together the two mandibles of their great bills, thus producing a loud clatter not unlike the sound of castanets; they frequently do this, both by day and night, during all the time they are rearing their two annual broods, and we have often, when spending a night in a Turkish village, been long kept awake, though weary with travel, by this incessant noise. In Isa. xxxviii., 14, the word "crane" refers to the stork, and the sound above described is not inaptly rendered "chatter." By a reference to the *tahlil*, or peculiar cry of the Arab women, described farther on, this will be still better understood.

The stork has always enjoyed a high reputation for parental affection. We knew one of these birds whose young brood, happening to fall from the nest on the top of a tree, had been instantly killed by the village boys; she refused to forsake her desolate post, remaining till the cold came on, and was frozen to death by the winter blasts. In the autumn, when the time of their migrations arrives—for they winter in Egypt*—these birds may be seen flying up in great numbers, and describing large circles in the air. This is the signal that the day of departure has come, and the storks of the entire region obey the summons, speedily soaring upward to join their companions. So strong is this instinct that we remember a stork with broken wing, which had been the pet of a family, making a violent effort to join the company as they passed overhead, and losing its life in the attempt.

We once came upon a flock of these aerial pilgrims, as they were traveling toward their winter-quarters; they had alighted in a great plain, traversed by a broad river with extensive marshes upon its banks, where the storks were having a merry meal of frogs and smaller fry. We stood upon a high mound and, overlooking the speckled plain, counted the birds

* Maurice, Appendix, p. 119.

composing a single patch, and, using this as a standard of comparison, we estimated the whole number at between twenty-five and thirty thousand. In 1847 a gentleman residing in Beirut, Syria, informed us that during the preceding autumn a stork, accidentally injured, was captured in his garden, when a valuable jewel was found fastened on its leg, with a name and address upon it. He wrote a letter to the address in Germany, thereon inscribed, and received a reply to the effect that the bird had been taken from its nest when young, and in spite of the most lavish attentions from a nobleman's child, had flown away in the autumn, carrying off the jewel with which the little girl had adorned it.

The black stork also abounds in Palestine, principally in the Valley of the Jordan, and in the marsh of Lake Hooleh. This variety is distinguished from the other chiefly by its shyness and its fear of man. It uniformly builds its nest upon tall trees.

There are several other large birds that might be mentioned, which are met with in the lands of the Bible; such as the white, the blue, and the brown heron, the bittern, etc.* The pelican is a migratory bird, which appears in Western Asia only in the winter, spending the summer in the north of Russia. He is perfectly white, and resembles the swan at a distance, with the exception of his long bill, and a large pouch underneath, which answers the purpose of a net or bag for the fish he catches. These birds may often be seen sailing majestically in a line, like so many ships of war, on a river, or lake, or even out in the open sea.†

The ostrich was well known to the inhabitants of countries bordering upon the desert.‡ It is still found in the desert of Sinai.§ Muslims are fond of suspending its emptied eggs from the ceilings of their sacred edifices, as a sort of talisman.

Geese and ducks, both wild and domestic, abound in all parts of the country, and the swan, both white and gray, comes

* Isa. xiv., 23.

† Isa. xxxiv., 11; "cormorant" here is *pelican* in the margin; see also Psa. cii., 6, where "wilderness," as usual, means tracts of uncultivated land, destitute of habitations. At the approach of man these unwieldy birds rise slowly into the air, considerably disturbing the surface of the water by the flapping of their wings.

‡ Job xxxix., 13; Lam. iv., 3.

§ Thevenot, p. 164.

down in the winter upon the inland lakes. In 1 Kings iv., 23, the words "fatted fowl" probably refer to tame geese. We need hardly add that the common domestic fowls are abundant in all parts of the country, for they probably originated in Asia, and were thence conveyed to more western lands.* Chickens continue to be artificially hatched in Egypt, as in the time of Herodotus, in ovens built under-ground, which contain six thousand eggs at a time.†

It is well known that the turkey, though now found wild in Circassia, was introduced into Europe from North America, about the year 1530, and has spread thence through the rest of the world.

* Neh. v., 18; Matt. xxiii., 37; Mark xiii., 35.

† Thevenot, p. 144.

CHAPTER XII.

REPTILES AND INSECTS OF BIBLE LANDS.

WE shall speak of only a few of these, on account of their being mentioned in the Scriptures, or as peculiarly characteristic of the country.

Serpents are common in all parts of the land, as may, from frequent allusions, be inferred to have been the case in ancient times. Most of them are harmless, yet they are generally disliked and killed wherever met, by the followers of every religious system, with the exception of the Yezidies, of whose peculiar ideas upon this subject we shall speak in another place.

When killed, a serpent is usually hung up on the branch of a tree or a bush, across a low wall or a large stone, in order to avoid the possibility of startling any one, who, suddenly seeing it lying in the path, might suppose it to be alive. This indicates a general dread of the snake, probably occasioned by the fact that a few species are highly venomous, and by the sly and gliding movement of the creature.

There are, however, persons who capture and train serpents, even of the venomous sort, for exhibition. This is chiefly done in Egypt and India, where some men do nothing else but go about and show their snakes, not merely in a torpid state, but even dancing to the music of a flute; they even irritate the venomous reptile to the extent of biting, in order to demonstrate that they are proof against its poison. Some have explained these feats by supposing that the fangs have been removed, which does not, however, appear to be the case. At Bombay, in India, the celebration of the "Feast of the Snakes" presents the extraordinary spectacle of some three hundred "charmers," each bearing a basket with about twenty cobras, gathered in a Hindoo temple, where the creatures are fed with buffalo's milk, furnished by the superstitious people. The men handle them with perfect unconcern. Two or three thousand cobras are thus fed through the day; the next morning

the charmers carry away their serpents, and let them go into the jungle. This festival occurs in July, when these reptiles are most venomous.* A new suggestion upon this mysterious subject is contained in Cunningham's "Two Years in New South Wales." "There is," he says, "in the colony a person called the *snake man*, who is rarely without some of the most dangerous snakes coiled in his bosom or his hat: he destroys their inclination to bite by *shutting several together in a bag*."

There are few serpents in Western Asia larger than six feet in length, and even these are rare. We have heard a man relate his encounter with a monster whose head he claimed to be as large as that of a young dog, and which, pursuing him as he fled, felled him senseless to the ground with a single stroke of its tail. The story, however, lacked confirmation, and we considered it either an invention or an exaggeration, resulting from fright or some personal motive. The characteristic tales in the style of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," with which people of all classes are wont to beguile their winter evenings, frequently make mention of land and sea serpents of stupendous length, and even furnished with powerful wings; and it is interesting to find that the ancients indulged in the same fancies, though there was as little foundation for them *then* as there is now. Such were doubtless the dragon and the griffin of the Greeks, as well as the sphinx of the Egyptians, and the various winged monsters of the Assyrians.

An Arabic proverb says: "Near the serpent spread thy bed; near the scorpion venture not;" and it is a fact fully corroborated by experience, that the serpent never bites without real or supposed provocation. A young man once applied to me for medicine on account of a violent attack of fever and ague, brought on by a singular incident. Being asleep on the ground in a vineyard, he was suddenly awakened by feeling the cold, clammy touch of a large snake gliding over his bare limbs. Though almost stupefied with terror, he had presence of mind enough to remain perfectly motionless till the creature, passing along the whole length of his body, and over his neck and face, finally glided harmlessly away.

The serpent has not the reputation of being "cunning" or

* L. Rousselet, "Tour du Monde, 1870-'71," p. 215.

"wise," nor are such characteristics suggested or sustained by any facts known in Western Asia. Nevertheless, its subtilty has passed into a proverb, doubtless by reason of the Mosaic account of the fall of our first parents;* and this is now as generally current among both Christians and Muslims as it was among the Hebrews in the days of our Lord.†

Venomous serpents are comparatively few in number, but their poison is deadly, and prompt in its action. Most of them belong to the general class of vipers, which includes both the asp and the adder.‡ The "fiery serpent" which destroyed so many of the Israelites in the wilderness, and was the occasion of a most impressive lesson respecting salvation through faith in a crucified Saviour, is supposed to be the cerastes, or the "*naia hajj*" of the Arabs, whose bite is deadly, and occasions a burning sensation. Both these species are only found in the desert, and must, by some casual circumstance, have occurred in large numbers in the camping-ground of the Israelites. The "fiery flying serpent," mentioned in Isa. xxx., 6, is probably a popular conception, adopted by the prophet, or a strong expression, indicative of the aggressive character of the two species above mentioned; for the only leaping serpents found in the wilderness are the "*thiareh*," which derive their name from their habit of springing from branch to branch of the date-trees in which they live; but these are not venomous. The asp, or small adder,§ is never seen among the snakes of the serpent-charmer.|| The common species is about four inches in length, and no thicker than a piece of stout wire. It lurks under stones, and even in the sand of the desert, whence it assails its prey, and thus it happens that, being disturbed by the foot of man or beast, it suddenly and fatally "bites his heel."¶ It also hides in the cracks and crevices of old walls, and is so strong in proportion to its size that, when irritated, it stands erect upon the lower part of its body, and is one of the few serpents that manifest an aggressive disposition.

The following incident was related to us by a gentleman whose testimony is perfectly reliable; it occurred in the South

* Gen. iii., 1.

† Matt. x., 16.

‡ Job xx., 16; Isa. lix., 5; Acts xxviii., 3.

§ Deut. xxxii., 33; Job xx., 14; Psa. xci., 13; Isa. xi., 8.

|| Psa. lviii., 4, 5.

¶ Gen. iii., 15; xlix., 17.

of France, where the asp is often found. He was visiting a classmate residing upon a beautiful estate, and made the acquaintance of his sister, a charming young person, the wife of an officer, and who added to her own personal attractions and refinement the interest which attaches to a young mother of a beautiful babe. One morning the three went out for a walk in the park, and the lady, complaining of weariness, sat down at the foot of a tree, saying she would rest there till the gentlemen's return. They were gone but a short time, when they retraced their steps, and approaching the lady, saw her head leaning against a tree, her eyes closed as if in sleep. As they drew nearer, however, to their horror they saw her color changed to a livid green. Her brother rushed to her side, and at the noise an adder sprang out of her bosom and escaped. It had been attracted by the scent of milk, as all serpents are. She probably made a motion in her sleep and was bitten, when almost instant and unconscious death ensued. It is well known that Cleopatra chose the asp as the means of producing the easiest kind of death, this heartless queen having previously experimented upon her slaves with poisonous snakes and other reptiles.

The scorpion varies in length from one to three inches, and resembles a dark-colored crab, with the addition of a long tail, having a sharp hook or fang at the extremity, with a vesicle full of liquid poison, which is forcibly ejected through a minute opening into the wound made by the sting. This creature grasps its prey with its claws and, bringing its long tail over its head, strikes and kills it.* Scorpions are found in all parts of Western Asia, but are harmless in the colder and more northern regions. They are numerous in Palestine, where their sting occasions much suffering; and there are as many as five distinct varieties of them in the desert of Sinai.† In Northern Africa they are sometimes of so great a size that their sting is mortal to man.

Scorpions feed upon insects, and hide themselves in holes under the stones, or in a bank by the roadside, lying in wait for their prey near the opening. The Arab children are acquainted with their haunts, and putting a bit of wax on the

* Rev. ix., 5, 10.

† Deut. viii., 15.

end of a straw, insert it in the scorpion's hole; the irritated creature rushes forward and seizes it with its claws, which sticking fast to the wax, it is easily drawn forth and dispatched. Three children at Beirut, whose father had been stung in the night by one of these reptiles, intent upon avenging him, set out upon a scorpion hunt along the banks of a narrow lane, shaded by a cactus hedge, among the mulberry-gardens. Armed with their waxed broom-straws, they captured and destroyed no less than one hundred and eleven scorpions in about an hour's time! But the secret habits of these creatures seem to indicate that they are more numerous than even the incident above cited would imply, and that they occupy a more important place in the economy of nature than is generally supposed. Colonel Maceroni has related the following incident, which occurred in the Campagna of Rome, and is, doubtless, equally applicable to every mosquito-infested locality in the Holy Land. He was spending a few days at a country lodge, where the rooms were formed by slight partitions, with a ceiling of loose boards. His companions complained of being greatly annoyed by the mosquitoes, from which he was himself quite free. As he lay one afternoon taking his *siesta*, he noticed that the ceiling was covered with mosquitoes, which were disappearing ever and anon, being caught up by a small black object, which occasionally darted down from the cracks. His curiosity being aroused, he arose, and standing upon a chair, examined the upper surface of the ceiling. What was his surprise to find it covered with scorpions busily engaged in fishing up the mosquitoes from beneath; he thus discovered the cause of his immunity from mosquito bites. This incident suggests the fact that the scorpion contributes to the comfort of man by the destruction of a variety of annoying insects, while the instances are comparatively rare in which its sting causes him to suffer; and even against this sting there is a means of protection, to which Orientals sometimes successfully resort, the knowledge of which has, perhaps, been handed down from remote antiquity. We once knew a poor widow whose children worked in a field so infested with scorpions as to be avoided by the villagers generally; even she herself dared not venture into it, while her children fearlessly handled the scorpions, even provoking them to use their stings, without

seeming to suffer the least inconvenience. When questioned as to the cause of this extraordinary immunity, she stated that, having bottled in spirits a number of scorpions' tails, she had administered a draught of the same to each of her children when a few days old. It is a well-known fact that in rural districts some midwives are in the habit of administering to young infants potions containing the poison of serpents or other reptiles, and those who have been thus inoculated are considered proof against injury from their bites. It does not seem improbable that the experiments tried by Mithridates and other sovereigns of the East with various poisons may have led to discoveries which local traditions keep afloat among the people, for the art of poisoning is still practiced in all parts of the country.

The language used by the young king Rehoboam to his complaining subjects,* "My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions," does not, it seems to us, refer, as some appear to think, to a peculiar kind of scourge bearing the name of scorpion on account of its shape, or the pain it inflicted. The expression must necessarily have been employed in a metaphorical sense, and the comparison seems to be between the slight suffering inflicted by striking with a common whip and the intense pain produced by the sting of the scorpion. Our Saviour's words, "And if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?"† appears to be a proverbial expression used in his day, similar to the Greek proverb, "a scorpion for a fish;" for we can not admit the necessity of supposing, as has been done by some commentators, the existence of a scorpion closely resembling an egg, both in color and shape, any more than a similar resemblance between a fish and a serpent, or between bread and a stone, in the preceding verse.

The frequent references to the scorpion in the Scriptures indicate that it was as common in ancient times as at present. The "ascent (or pass) of Akrabbim (or the scorpions)" may be cited as an instance.‡

There is a great variety of small lizards in Western Asia, most of them of a dark color, but some variegated, and one species of a bright orange. They are graceful in form and

* 1 Kings xii., 14.

† Luke xi., 12.

‡ Numb. xxxiv., 4.

movement, and perfectly innocuous. The species to which the Scriptures probably refer* is the only one in the country of any considerable size, being about as large as the common rat, and of a bright green color. He seems to be venomous, for it is said that his bite has sometimes proved fatal to dogs. The chameleon, referred to in the same passage, is about half as large; it is a species of tree lizard, extremely homely and uncouth, presenting the appearance of an animal formed of bones alone, with a thin skin covering them. The five toes of its feet are united, so as to form but two, resembling a thumb and fore-finger. It uses its bony tail as a prehensile instrument, by twisting it round a branch. Its protruding eyeballs



The Chameleon and its Tongue. (Lev. ii., 30.)

are covered with a thin skin, having a small opening in the centre in front of the pupils; this moves to and fro, as the vision is attracted to different objects, and the two eyes, being usually turned in independent directions, give the creature a most singular appearance. Its motions are slow to an extreme, and as it creeps along its entire body gradually assumes the color of the branch or leaves of the tree on which it rests, becoming gray, green, yellow, reddish-purple, or black, as the case may be, and thus rendering it invisible alike to its enemies and to its prey. When a fly or any other insect comes within the chameleon's reach, he turns toward it one of his goggle-eyes, and suddenly and unerringly darts out upon it

* Lev. xi., 30.

his long and slender tongue, whose extremity is furnished with a glutinous matter, and which can be protruded to a distance of twice the animal's length, being formed on the principle of the spy-glass. So sudden and rapid is the act of thus seizing and dispatching his prey, that the ancients believed this creature lived on air. The reader can not fail to notice, in perusing this account, that the chameleon is one of the most remarkable instances to be met with in animated nature of the adaptation of means to an end by the all-wise Creator. The chameleon, in common with the other lizards, is never eaten.*

The locust is an insect to which a painful interest attaches, on account of its having been one of the severest scourges with which Divine Providence has, from time immemorial, visited the human race in the countries longest inhabited by man.†

This creature is spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures under a variety of names, and in our version as the "locust," the "grasshopper," the "beetle,"‡



The Asiatic Locust. (Psa. cix., 23.)

and the "green-worm" (margin, Amos vii., 1). But it is now agreed by commentators that these different names designate either the same species, or very slight and unimportant varieties, or again different stages of development of the locust.

These insects are found at all times, and in every part of Western Asia, in Arabia, and in Northern Africa. The full-grown locusts are from two to three inches in length, and different from the common grasshopper in their regularly elongated bodies, their reddish color, and the length of their wings, which enable them to rise to a considerable height above the ground, and to pass over a distance of several miles by sailing before the wind.

These insects do not ordinarily so abound anywhere as to be troublesome, or to commit extensive ravages. It is only occasionally that favorable circumstances produce a great increase in their numbers, and render them a scourge to the lands they inhabit, or those to which they migrate. They lay their eggs in the autumn in holes and cracks of the earth, and should

* Lev. xi., 30.

† 2 Chron. vii., 13.

‡ Lev. xi., 22.

the winter be dry and warm, and their numerous enemies unsuccessful in devouring them, they are hatched in the spring, and cover the earth with a black, moving mass of larvæ which



Locusts. From a Babylonian Gem.

do far more injury than the full-grown locusts. It is in this state, with their wings yet unformed, that they are correctly pictured on a Babylonian gem of which our illustration is a copy. They rapidly attain the

size of the common grasshopper, and proceed in one and the same direction, first crawling, and at a later period leaping as they go, devouring every green thing that lies in their path.* They advance more slowly than a devouring fire, but the ravages they commit are scarcely inferior or less to be dreaded.† Fields of standing wheat and barley, vineyards, mulberry orchards, and groves of olive, fig, and other trees are in a few hours deprived of every green blade and leaf, the very bark being often destroyed. Their voracity is such, that in the neighborhood of Broosa, in the year 1856, an infant having been left asleep in its cradle under some shady trees was found not long after partly devoured by the locusts! The ground over which their devastating hordes have passed at once assumes an appearance of sterility and dearth.‡ Well did the Romans call them “the burners of the land,” which is the literal meaning of our word locust. On they move, covering the ground so completely as to hide it from sight,§ and in such numbers that it often takes three or four days for the mighty host to pass by. When seen at a distance, this swarm of advancing locusts resembles a cloud of dust or sand, reaching a few feet above the ground, as the myriads of insects leap forward.|| The only thing that momentarily arrests their progress is a sudden change of weather, for the cold benumbs them while it lasts. They also keep quiet at night, swarming like bees on the bushes and hedges until the morning sun warms and revives them, and enables them to proceed on their devastating march.¶ They “have no king” nor leader, yet they falter not, but press on, in serried ranks, urged in the same direction by an irresistible impulse,

* Exod. x., 15.

† Deut. xxviii., 38; Psal. lxxviii., 46; Joel i., 7.

|| Ussher, p. 116.

† Joel ii., 3.

§ Exod. x., 5.

¶ Nahum iii., 17.

and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left for any sort of obstacle.* When a wall or a house lies in their way, they climb straight up, going over the roof to the other side, and blindly rush in at the open doors and windows.† When they come to water, be it a mere puddle or a river, a lake or the open sea, they never attempt to go round it, but unhesitatingly leap in and are drowned, and their dead bodies floating on the surface form a bridge for their companions to pass over. The scourge thus often comes to an end, but it as often happens that the decomposition of millions of insects produces pestilence and death.‡ History records a remarkable instance which occurred in the year 125 before the Christian era. The insects were driven by the wind into the sea, in such vast numbers that their bodies, being driven back by the tide upon the land, caused a stench which produced a fearful plague, whereby eighty thousand persons perished in Libya, Cyrene, and Egypt.§

The locust, however, soon acquires its wings, and proceeds on its way by flight, whenever a strong breeze favors its progress. Our attention has often been attracted by the sudden darkening of the sun in a summer sky, accompanied by the peculiar noise which a swarm of locusts always makes moving through the air, and, glancing upward, we have seen them passing like a cloud at a height of two or three hundred feet.¶ Some of them are constantly dropping to the earth, and, after resting a while, are driven by a common impulse to rise again and proceed with the wind, so that besides the principal cloud, single locusts or a few together may be seen in almost every part of the sky. During a great flight they sometimes drop so thickly upon the ground that it is impossible to step without treading upon some of them, and the poor villagers, in consternation, busy themselves kindling fires, whose smoke serves to prevent the locusts from alighting upon their fields, orchards, or vineyards. The people of Syria believe *noise* to be as effectual in driving away locusts as in attracting a swarm of bees; hence, upon the appearance of a flight of these dreaded insects, the inhabitants of the villages, men, women, and children, rush out, armed with any tin or copper pans or ket-

* Prov. xxx., 27.

† Exod. x., 6; Joel ii., 9.

‡ Joel ii., 20.

§ See authorities quoted by Prideaux, vol. iii., p. 417.

¶ Joel ii., 10.

bles or rattles they can lay hold of, and strive, by their deafening shouts and din, to scare the unwelcome visitors away. The flying locust, however, is not so much feared as its larvæ, which advance only by creeping and jumping; for, however numerous they may be, they are sure to disappear with the first wind, from whatever quarter it may come; and when this happens to blow in the direction of the sea, they are soon dropped upon its billows, till there remains "not a locust in all the coasts."*

The foregoing statements illustrate the manner in which the plague of the locusts was brought by Moses upon the land of Egypt, and subsequently withdrawn. They doubtless flew with a north-east wind over the Isthmus of Suez, and were driven back by a cool north-west wind, which caused them to perish in the Red Sea;† for we must bear in mind that, though most of the flights of locusts are from Arabia, or Central Africa northward, yet one species, called *migratoria*, from its extended wanderings, is supposed to originate in the plains of Tartary, and spreads thence to Persia, Arabia, Western Asia, and even to the Mauritius. This species has also visited Europe, and found its way, in 1748, to the British Isles.

The locusts have numerous enemies. The approach of a flight of these insects is the signal for the storks, crows, sparrow-hawks, magpies, starlings, and many other birds, to gather together for a feast. But their greatest enemy is the rose-colored starling, a beautiful



The rose-colored Starling.

creature—its body a delicate pink, with jet-black wings and tail—which goes in flocks, and whose appearance is a sure sign that locusts are not far

away. The usefulness of this bird is so fully recognized that stringent laws exist forbidding its destruction. Man also, who suffers most from the depredations of the locusts, is one of their active foes. It is a popular belief in Western Asia that, where a great flight of these insects invades a district, they continue in it for seven successive years. This belief may have had

* Exod. x., 19.

† Exod. x., 13-19.



Flight of Locusts in Southern Russia. (Exod. x., 13.)

some foundation, in fact, during the long ages when Moham-medan fatalism prevented the use of means to ward off the effects of any natural calamity. No hope of deliverance from locusts was then entertained unless "*kismet*" (the Fates) should vouchsafe to them an exceptionally cold or rainy winter. But more rational ideas have crept in from Europe during the last half century, and the government now spends considerable sums in encouraging the people to collect and destroy the eggs of this insect. This has sensibly diminished the extent, and shortened the duration of their inroads. The full-grown insect, moreover, is extensively eaten by the poorer classes throughout Africa, Arabia, and Persia, particularly by the Bedawin of the desert. When the locusts come down upon the face of the earth, crowds of people go forth, and collect vast numbers of them in bags, even loading horses and cattle with the booty. They are roasted and eaten as butter upon loaves of bread, resembling shrimps in taste, or they are boiled in water with a little salt, dried in the sun, and, being deprived of their wings and legs, are packed in bags for use. They are beaten to a powder, which is mixed with flour and water, made into little cakes, and used as a substitute for bread when flour is scarce. Dried locusts are generally exposed for sale in the markets of Medina, Bagdad, and even Damascus.

The statement that John the Baptist's food, while in the wilderness, chiefly consisted of "locusts and wild honey,"* would best describe the habitual fare of those who at the present day lead a life of isolation and poverty in the same region; and we know that the Mosaic law allowed the Hebrews to eat the locust.†

The frequent description of Palestine as a land "flowing with milk and honey," points out the fact that the honey-bee, and, as a concomitant, wild flowers too, abounded in it anciently as at the present day. The flowers are so various in Western Asia, that the honey of different districts assumes very marked peculiarities. The honey of Kirk-Aghaj, near Pergamus, in Asia Minor, chiefly made of the flower of the cotton-plant, it is said, so closely resembles butter in appearance, that it can only be detected by the taste. The honey of Mount Hymettus is dark

* Matt. iii., 4.

† Lev. xi., 22.

and disagreeable to persons unused to it; the Athenians prefer it to every other. It is made of the flowers of aromatic plants.

Pococke relates that when the Egyptians on the Upper Nile find that their bees obtain no more honey around their villages, they take their hives on boats and sail down the river, stopping at every green spot to let the bees collect honey from the flowers on the shore; so that by the time they reach Cairo, which is their market, their hives are full of honey.* In some parts of Asia Minor, the hives which are kept in the villages are transported at a certain season of the year to the slopes and high plains of the mountains, where the bees feed upon the blossoms of the pine and of mountain plants. Orientals are very fond of honey, and usually eat it in the comb. Wax is used to make tapers and candles, which are chiefly burned in the performance of religious rites.

One of the most interesting insects to be met with in Western Asia, unknown indeed to the ancients, but decking the moderns in glossy garments, and creating an industry which supports thousands of people upon the slopes of Mount Lebanon, and hundreds of thousands in other portions of the lands of the Bible, is the silk-worm. Its produce appears to have been unknown in the West until the conquests of Alexander. At a later period silk was made in Persia; but the silk-worm was not introduced in Western Asia until the reign of the emperor Justinian, *i. e.*, in the latter half of the sixth century. Silk was at one time so great a luxury in Rome, that it was sold for an equal weight of gold.† There are few persons now who do not wear more or less silk. The cultivation of the mulberry-tree, the cutting of its branches and leaves, the gradual growth of the worm, the formation of the cocoon, the issuing forth of the butterfly, and the laying of the tiny eggs, are episodes in the process of silk-making which we have often watched with intensest interest. We allude to this because it is an important item in the life of the modern population of Bible lands, silk-worms being reared from Persia to the Ægean and almost to the Red Sea. Much of the silk thus obtained is consumed at home; but large quantities go to Europe, the value of the article compensating the heavy cost and insecurity of transpor-

* Pococke, vol. i., p. 210.

† Prideaux, vol. iv., p. 302, note.

tation. We give a sketch of the various episodes in the life of the silk-worm, for the gratification of such of our readers as may not be familiar with them.



Silk-worm, Cocoon, Larva, Butterfly, and Eggs.

The caterpillar is at the present day a great scourge in the lands of the Bible. There are several species, and their ravages are mostly confined to fruit-bearing shrubs and trees. They are doubtless referred to in Joel i., 4, and ii., 25, and in Amos iv., 9, where the Hebrew word is translated "palmer-worm" and "canker-worm" in our version.

No injury appears to be done to either plant or tree by the *cicada* (not a *gryllus*, but of the order *Homoptera*), an insect which looks like a common fly magnified to one and a half inches in length.* It spends the entire day in singing, as is inimitably told by La Fontaine, in his fable entitled "La Cigale and la Fourmie," and spends the winter buried in the earth. She is as great a favorite with the moderns as she was with the ancients, with Homer, Anacreon, Virgil, and the Athenians; yet her song is monotonous in the extreme. She is a social creature, for she is not only gregarious, but ever resorts to the neighborhood of human dwellings. No conception of the country can be complete and perfect which does not throw in the element of the cicada's unceasing song by day, and of the innumerable crickets

* A small species of cicada occurs in North America, called a locust, while the locust of the Bible, which has this year (1874) committed so terrible ravages at the West, is there called a grasshopper.

by night, varied here and there by the hooting of the mournful owl or the *duke*, or the chatter of the screech-owl.

We have already referred to the fact that many varieties of shell-fish are eaten along the shores of the Mediterranean. Of the land shells, one alone is used as an article of food; it is the common *helix*, or snail, whose shell is an inch and a half to two inches in diameter. It is eaten, however, only by the poorer classes, excepting during the long fasts of the Christian sects preceding Christmas and Easter, when snails are gathered in large numbers, in the gardens and among the bushes on the hill-sides; and they are exposed for sale in the markets. They are thrown into boiling water, and, when cooked, resemble clams in taste and consistency. They were, in all probability, similarly eaten by the poor Hebrews; for the word "snail," in the list of animals forbidden as food by the Mosaic law,* seems to be an incorrect rendering, and refers to some kind of lizard. It is thought by some commentators that David's comparison of the wicked to the melting of a snail† indicates a belief that this animal melted away, like snow or ice; it seems to us, however, that it rather refers to the well-known habits of the snail, which boldly comes forth from its shell, blind to all danger, and runs out its feelers to their utmost length, but quickly withdraws them at the slightest touch, and rapidly and cowardly retreats within its fortress. The snail, moreover, is so frail that it may be crushed by its most insignificant enemy, and aptly illustrates the utter impotency of the proudest and mightiest of the wicked under the government of Jehovah.

The fly is repeatedly spoken of in Scripture as a divine scourge; not only with reference to one of the plagues at the time of Israel's exodus,‡ but also at other and subsequent periods.§ It continues so to be at the present day. The insect to which we refer is the common horse-fly, which greatly multiplies in all the low grounds formed of rich and well-watered alluvial soil, as soon as the spring rains have fallen and the warm weather begins. The shepherds and herdsmen and all the nomads are then compelled to drive their flocks to the mountains and elevated plateaus, to save them from being tormented by these insects. Wild animals set the example, and

* Lev. xi., 30.

† Psa. lviii., 8.

‡ Exod. viii., 21-24.

§ Isa. vii., 18.

regularly migrate from the lower to the higher grounds, and even seek the deepest shades of the forest. Nor is it an uncommon sight to see a long-tailed magpie or a jackdaw coolly seated upon the back of a sheep or a deer, picking off a good meal of flies from the evidently grateful sufferer.

But the fly which chiefly constituted the plague of Egypt* may have been the destructive fly called *tsaltsalya* in Abyssinia,† and *tsetse* in South Africa,‡ which kills cattle and horses, and even attacks men. It is confined to the low rich lands formed of black mould, where it usually makes its appearance in the rainy season. Hence Goshen, which was not overflowed by the Nile, but contained pasturage, was distinguished from the rest of Egypt first of all in the plague of the flies.§

In the present chapter we have not attempted any thing like a complete list of the insects and creeping things which abound in Western Asia. We are not writing either the natural history or the entomology of those interesting lands; our object is simply to place before the reader's mind a complete picture of the principal surroundings of the present inhabitants of those countries, and of the influence they exert upon their character and manners. We shall presently visit their homes, and picture to our readers men, women, and children just as they are—analyze their every-day life, mingle in their joys and sorrows. We may then again have occasion to refer to objects in nature, now delineated, and sometimes to touch upon other objects of secondary importance, not previously mentioned, but required to make the picture complete, and point out, as far as we are able, wherein they agree, and in what respects they differ from those of Bible times.

We have now placed before our readers a description of the physical features and natural productions of the lands of the Bible, directing our attention chiefly, but by no means exclusively, to that most interesting portion of our globe which was the scene of the principal events recorded in the Old and New Testaments, and particularly pointing their influence upon the manners, the customs, and the life and character of the in-

* Psa. lxxviii., 45; cv., 31.

† Bruce, vol. vi., p. 234.

‡ Livingstone, p. 612.

§ Exod. viii., 22. The plague of the common fly is described by Denham and Clapperton, vol. i., p. 421.

habitants. In perusing this account, it is impossible not to be struck with the slightness of the changes that have taken place in those countries from the earliest historic period down to the present time. True, the cities are all in ruins; scarcely one stone is left standing upon another of all the "pleasant habitations" of these goodly lands; the country has been wasted, and its fertility impaired; the forests have been burned or cut down, and some of the most fruitful regions have become desolate. Yet all the principal features remain unaltered; the contour of the mountains and the hills, the very rocks, plains, and valleys, and the meanderings of the streams, are still the same. But changes there are, consisting chiefly in the relative proportions of the products of the soil. We have already pointed out some of these changes, and as the subject has an important bearing on our final deductions, we sum them up in the following brief epitome: The cedar has almost disappeared from "the goodly Lebanon," and the cypress shoots up tall and tapering from many a spot on the plain below; the palm-tree has ceased to be the appropriate emblem of the land of Phœnicia; and the mulberry, almost unknown to the ancients, is now extensively cultivated for the production of silk, but as it requires irrigation, it is mostly confined to the slopes of the mountains and the banks of the streams. The people were anciently clad in woolen and linen; the former is still used, but for the latter cheap cotton fabrics and costly silks have been substituted.*

The consequence is that the body is covered more than formerly, and "anointing with oil" has ceased to be practiced. The fruits of the earth are unchanged, but rice was introduced by the caliphs, and is extensively produced; it is now an important article of food. Tobacco is widely cultivated, and its use has become so universal that it is hard to conceive of

* It seems impossible now to ascertain with any degree of certainty at what period cotton was introduced into Western Asia. Many authors of weight claim that it was known to the ancient Egyptians; but the most careful examination of the wrappings of the mummies has failed to reveal the presence of cotton. The earliest distinct reference to the plant is found in the writings of Pliny, who lived in the beginning of the second century of our era. Our word cotton is, however, evidently Arabic, and the plant is thought to have existed in Arabia from time immemorial. References to the use of cotton as a material for garments, even to the starching of it, are found in ancient Indian books, called the "Institutes of Manu," dating as far back as 800 B.C.—WILSON, "Rig-veda," vol. viii., p. 105.

the fact that but a few centuries ago this weed was quite unknown. Coffee, also, has become an indispensable commodity, though there is no trace of its having been employed by the ancients. The use of these two narcotics can not fail to have exerted a powerful influence upon the temper and character of the inhabitants of Bible lands.

Some of the wild animals have disappeared, for the lion's roar is no longer heard in the mountains of Judea; the wild ass has withdrawn to the Eastern desert, and the ostrich is now almost wholly confined to the African wastes. Some of the useful domestic animals, on the other hand, have increased in numbers but deteriorated in quality, owing, perhaps, to the insecurity of life and property. Cattle are smaller and weaker, for they are farther removed from the terrible "reem" which constituted the original stock, and has almost perished from the face of the earth. The buffalo, however, has been introduced from India, and is extensively employed in work to which the now diminished cattle are no longer equal. But the horse, being more than ever the dependence and right arm of man, has probably improved, especially in the Arabian breeds. The common kinds have doubtless become more common, and perhaps the mule and the ass as well.

While, however, we bear in mind the slight changes just pointed out, we are more and more strongly impressed with the remarkable resemblance still existing between the Bible lands of ancient times and those of the present day.

We again remind our readers that our description thus far has had for its object not so much a correct delineation of the land and its products, as a description of the manners and customs which are connected with their cultivation and uses. It will be conceded that this class of customs was least likely to be altered by the political changes which have ensued in the course of ages. We have, therefore, in this first portion of our work, confined ourselves to the description of these manners and customs, the better to prepare the reader for the study of those which are more liable to vary, and which, indeed, we shall find very considerably modified.

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